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first Presbyterian Church ~ Urbana, Illinois

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY



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CENTENNIAL HISTORY
of
The First Presbyterian Church
URBANA, ILLINOIS
1856-1956

FOREWORD: 1856-1956

Twenty-five years have passed since Dean Clark wrote his interesting and informative *History of the First Presbyterian Church, Urbana, Illinois*—the church which he and Mrs. Clark loved and to which they gave so much in so many ways. During this quarter of a century many important events have occurred: gratifying, heartening events in the history of the church. Inevitably, too, there have been times of trial and of loss; for Dean Clark and a goodly number of his contemporaries are no longer to be seen in their accustomed places in the sanctuary. They are sorely missed. Yet what a heritage they have bequeathed! What a call to Christian service the record of their lives!

The year 1956 marks the end of the first century of organized Presbyterianism in Urbana. The event calls for special recognition: for honoring those who have built so well; for recording the history, that it may fulfill its rôle of "teaching by example"; for taking stock of the present, that the future may be made even brighter and better.

As part of the Centennial Year observation, therefore, a supplement to Dean Clark's history has been prepared. It is based upon the contributions of a number of persons, so that no one or two "authors" can claim it; nor, by the same token, can they be blamed for omissions which are inevitable or for errors which are probable! It is by no means a complete history. Rather, it but summarizes the outstanding incidents and achievements, those that are believed to be of the greatest interest and importance. It leaves out a thousand personal details that might be included—humorous, sad, inspiring, endearing. These will remain unwritten history, by no means unimportant to those who cherish them in their memories.

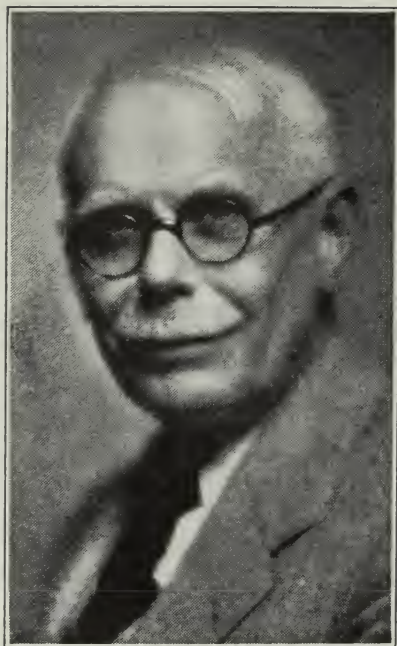
THE HISTORY OF
The First Presbyterian Church
URBANA, ILLINOIS



1856-1931



BY
THOMAS ARKLE CLARK



THOMAS ARKLE CLARK



THE first settler in what is now Urbana was, according to the most authentic history, Runnel Fielder, who came to the community in 1822. Just where he came from, no one now seems to know. He built a small cabin near the "Blackberry Schoolhouse" and proceeded to cultivate the soil. His son was probably the first person to conduct a school in Champaign county. In eight or nine years he moved on to Tazewell county and passed out of history.

At about the same time as Runnel Fielder settled in this locality, though a little later, William Tompkins squatted on a tract of land, and built his cabin near where the Courier building now stands and on the bank of the creek whose course can still be traced through the town. These two are known as the "first settlers" of Urbana.

There were no well developed roads in those days. The Illinois Central Railroad had not been thought of, and if one needed to buy clothing or groceries he could do so only by picking his way over trails on foot or horse back a hundred miles or so to towns already established. Later the settlers in and about Urbana, when they needed supplies, traveled a rude and sinuous road, climbing hills and fording streams on the way to Chicago where they could find market for their produce and buy the merchandise which they needed.

For a good many years after Fielder and Tompkins began to cultivate the soil there were few people living in what later became Champaign county. Houses were far apart, visiting and communication of any sort was difficult. Urbana as a village was not organized until 1833. Even then there were few settlers, most of the people who could have been said to form a part of the village, being farmers who lived near the site of the established county seat. Neighbors were still few and far between, and travel from one place to another involved untold hardships and difficulties. There was little money in the country, and people had quite all that they could do to make a living. Churches there were none, and, had there been, there would have been little use for them, for settlers were too far apart for easy or possible coming together, and there was neither time nor money available for religious activities.

The Baptists and the Methodists were the first religious pioneers in Champaign county. Wandering circuit riders and evangelists of these two denominations began early to make their way across the unbroken prairies toward the wooded tracts on or near which the first settlers built their cabins. These men came unannounced, and

they asked for nothing except for lodging, a little food, and a chance to preach in private houses or in the open air wherever a few people could be gathered together.

The story is told of one of these itinerant saints, that he eked out a precarious livelihood by bringing with him from Indiana a load of whiskey—good whiskey, too, it was alleged to be,—which he had bought for twenty cents a gallon and which he retailed at an advance in price to thirsty souls of the little congregations which gathered to hear him expound the gospel, thus, on the side, making an honest living, as he saw it, while he gave his regular time to evangelistic work. The times and the ideas of some of us as regards temperance have changed since then.

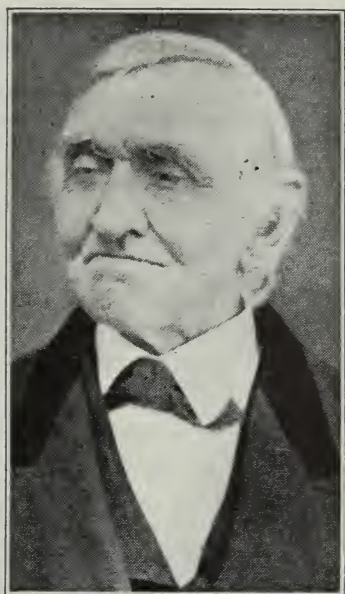
John Dunham, a minister of the United Brethren denomination, was probably the first preacher who came to Champaign county. In 1831, Judge J. O. Cunningham, in his history of Champaign county, says, Dunham preached a sermon at the home of one of the settlers, and from time to time repeated his visits. The story is told that he rode an ox from place to place and that while he roared and bellowed within, as these early preachers were wont to do, the ox, tied to a sapling, roared and bellowed without.

John G. Robinson, an immigrant from Kentucky, was among the first Baptists to hold meetings for religious instruction. A Baptist church was, in 1838, organized at the Brumley school house, two miles east of Urbana, and another, in 1839, at Farmer City, but this latter organization soon changed to Mahomet. The Mahomet Baptists built a church in 1841.

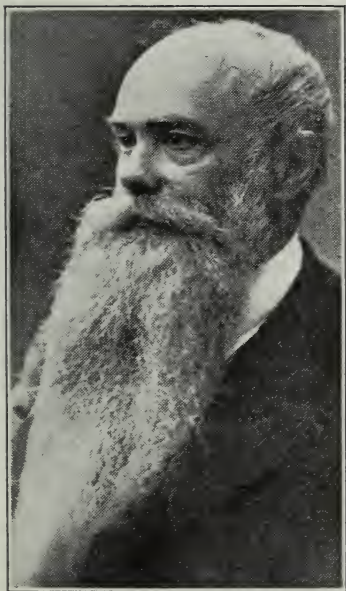
The Reverend James Holmes was the first Methodist minister to come to the Urbana settlement, which he did in 1835. Holmes not only preached, but he also followed the trade of mill-wright and built a grist mill for John Brownfield, one of the early settlers. It was he who, probably in 1836, organized the first Methodist class in this county. This class was the forerunner of the first Methodist Episcopal church of Urbana. The Urbana Mission, organized in 1839, as the result of a camp meeting held on the banks of the creek one mile east of Urbana, marked the real beginning of Methodism in this community. Upon the organization of this Mission the Reverend Arthur Bradshaw was put in charge. The writer of this history, as a little boy, remembers hearing Mr. Bradshaw preach in a district school house in the neighborhood in north-eastern Champaign county in which he was living.

In his autobiography Mr. Bradshaw tells of his coming to Urbana.

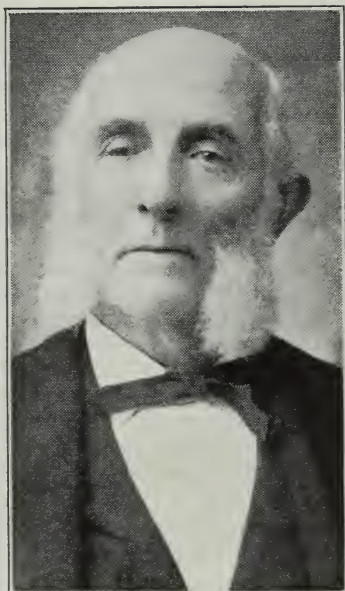
"My next appointment (1839)", he says, "was Urbana Mission. This caused a move of one hundred and fifty miles. We were compelled to move



AARON BENNETT



JUDGE A. M. AYRES



THOMAS S. HUBBARD

in an ox wagon, camp out about half of the nights, and take the weather as it came; so we had rain, wind, and storm. When we arrived in Urbana, our goods were all wet, a fierce wind blowing from the north-west, and no empty house in town. We took up lodging for a few days with Simon Motes, in his cabin in the north part of the village. The little society and friends had put up the body of a hewed log cabin with rafters, but no roof, floor or chimney.

"In 1840 we put up the frame of a small church, thirty by forty feet, in Urbana, and enclosed it; and in the fall, as I was leaving for my next appointment, I was sued for the shingles that went on the church."

There was a parsonage built, also, for the minister, and it is described by Judge Cunningham:

"The 'parsonage', partly prepared, was finished with a split-board roof, floors of the same kind, and a mud and stick chimney, and here the pastor and his family were housed when the first church built within the county was commenced and so far completed as to be occupied."

This church was located on the south side of Elm street between Market (now Broadway) and Race on a lot donated by the county commissioners. Nancy Webber's timber furnished the logs, and Colonel Busey's saw-mill got them into shape. The structure, excepting a small space where the pulpit and the "amen corners" were located, was neither floored nor plastered.

"In this condition," Judge Cunningham says, "with neither windows nor doors, and with no other seats than those afforded by the uncovered sleepers or joists, hewn upon the upper side, was the structure occupied by a worshipping congregation for the first summer and, perhaps, for a longer period when the weather permitted. It was not until 1843 that the building was finally completed according to the original plan, being floored, plastered and seated with wide slab benches. The final work had been done by free contributions of labor and materials. It is said that Colonel Busey gave the flooring, Archa Campbell the glass, and Matthias Carson, a skilled mechanic, the window sash and door.

"In its finished condition it was unpainted, both inside and outside, until two zealous sisters—Harriet Harvey and Susan Cantner—with discriminating zeal for outside appearances, unassisted by any one, whitewashed the entire outside of the house as well as the rough plastering on the inside, using a preparation of lime and other ingredients, including among them salt. The building looked well in its coat of whitewash, but the town cows, then quite numerous, (and not restrained by any city ordinance from roaming at will until the early nineties) lost to all reverence for the sacred structure, were tempted by the salt to lick the clapboards which they persisted in doing so long as the saline taste remained. At times, owing to this practice of the cows, a worshipping congregation was disturbed, and, to secure their legal rights it became necessary to station a guard of boys upon the outside during service."

This church was sold in 1856 for \$350. A new church having been built on the corner of Race and Green streets where the beautiful Methodist church stands today, the old building was made over and used for years to house a livery stable.

It was under such trying conditions as these that religious organizations in early times gained a foothold in Urbana.

The Presbyterian church was not so quick in establishing itself in this community as were the Methodists and the Baptists. It was not until 1850 that the first Presbyterian organization was formed in Champaign county. The Reverend John A. Steele under the authority of the Presbytery of Palestine, according to Judge Cunningham, made the organization. It is not unlikely that at the beginning some of the members who later helped to form the Urbana church were members of the Champaign church. For a time the Champaign church held its services in the Illinois Central depot building.

If a definite record of the founding of the Urbana church was originally kept, that record has been lost. The first authentic minutes of the Session of the church bear the date of November 3, 1866. There is, however, this record made in the minutes of the Board of Trustees:

"Whereas upon inquiry and examination in January and February, 1875, the Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, Illinois, are satisfied that there has never been kept a record of the proceedings of the Board of Trustees, nor of the Congregational meetings of said church, it is deemed advisable that all information and memoranda relating to the temporal affairs of the church which can be obtained, be engrossed and that hereafter the secretary be required to keep a fair record."

It was from this record then made and recorded in the handwriting of Mrs. Thomas S. Hubbard, and from that which follows, that this history has been compiled.

In the records of the Champaign county court house we find the following record:

"Be it remembered, that on this 28th day of January, 1857, in accordance with notice previously given, the constituent members of the society of the first Presbyterian Church of the city of Urbana, met for the purpose of electing a Board of Trustees, for said society, to be known as and styled the Board of Trustees of the First Presbyterian church of Urbana, to have and (to) exercise all the rights and privileges unto them conferred by statute in such cases made and provided.

"Which action resulted as follows in manner and length of time as is hereby certified to over our respective hands and seals.

<i>For One Year</i>	<i>For Two Years</i>	<i>For Three Years</i>
T. S. Hubbard	L. M. Cutcheon	W. N. Coler
Asa Gere	E. Boyden	A. M. Ayres
Elisha Harkness	S. M. Noel	A. Lyons"

This record was certified to by A. M. Ayers and sworn to and subscribed before William H. Somers, county clerk.

According to the History of Champaign county compiled by Brink, McDonough & Co., of Philadelphia, which differs in its

statements from those in Judge Cunningham's accounts, the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana was organized under the direction of Presbytery by the Reverend Thayer Newell in the fall of 1850. Previous to this time, the history relates, but one Presbyterian sermon had been preached in Champaign county and that was by the Reverend E. H. Lynn, in 1838. Mr. H. F. Bouen was the first minister. He was sent by Presbytery and employed for six months, but his health failed, and the church was left vacant at the end of three months. After Mr. Bouen left, there were no regular services held until July, 1851, when Mr. Robert Lilly came and remained a little more than a year. There is no record of services from November, 1852, until May, 1854, when the Reverend E. K. Lynn began his work as stated supply. The following June twenty-eight persons united with the church. Services were held in the court house and the school house until the latter part of July, 1854. About this time, or earlier, the Illinois Central Railroad was completed to Champaign, (then called West Urbana) and services were often held in the depot building. From that date only occasional services were held until the fall of 1856. It should be said that the organization which flourished with more or less enthusiasm from 1850 to 1856 was composed of members of the old school branch of the church. The members of the organization of the Urbana church as it now exists were of the new school.

In December, 1856, December 21 is probably the exact date, the Reverend Isaac P. Stryker, of Rome, New York, came and preached for the group of Presbyterians residing in Urbana. This meeting was held in the basement of the old Methodist church at the southeast corner of Race and Green Streets. It was at this time, that the present church was organized. The church roll as published at that time contained twenty-nine names as follows:

Alex. M. Ayres	Mrs. Geo. Nichols
Mrs. Alex M. Ayres	Mrs. William Nichol
Samuel M. Noel	Mrs. Sarah Black
Mrs. Samuel M. Noel	Thomas Rea
Thomas S. Hubbard	Mrs. Thomas Rea
Mrs. Thomas S. Hubbard	Robert Anderson
Mrs. Aseneth Snyder	Mrs. Robert Anderson
Mrs. Isabella Hunt	Mrs. Louisa Gorman
Miss Mary Hall	Mrs. Mahlon Lindley
James T. Rittenhouse	Mrs. Anna Crutcheon
Mrs. James T. Rittenhouse	James A. Maynard
C. S. Vickers	Mrs. James A. Maynard
Mrs. C. S. Vickers	Isaac P. Stryker
George Nichols	Mrs. Isaac P. Stryker
	Mrs. Glenn.

It is rather interesting to note that none of these members were

young people. Indeed, the first twenty-five years of the church's activity showed the names of very few young people upon the church roll.

At the time of the organization of the church three ruling elders were elected. These were Thomas S. Hubbard, Judge A. M. Ayres, and Samuel M. Noel. A few years later (in 1866), Aaron Bennett was added to the list. The administration of these men was a very remarkable one. They were all men of education and refinement; they had influence and standing in the community and they won the respect of their neighbors. For more than thirty years they formed the spiritual and financial backbone of the church. Judge Ayres was one of the leading jurists of the county. His residence still stands at the southeast corner of Lincoln and Illinois Streets—dignified and impressive as he was himself,—and two of his daughters, Miss Addie Ayres and Miss Sigourney Ayers, are still active members of this church. He was for the first fifteen years superintendent of the Sunday School. Mr. Hubbard was a New Englander, born and bred. He was a graduate of Yale University with the class of 1849 and came to Urbana with his wife in 1854 when college men were rare in this part of the middle west. The visiting ministers, Judge Cunningham says, “were entertained at his home to such an extent that it became known among the pioneers as ‘The Minister’s Hotel’.” Mr. Bennett was of sturdy stock also. Early in life he came across country from New Jersey, the state of his birth, to Indiana, making the journey in a covered wagon. He came to Illinois in 1855, and was one of the early members of the Champaign Presbyterian church. Of Mr. Noel not so much is known. He was the faithful clerk of the Session for more than twenty years, and his accurate records have helped to make this history possible. He withdrew from the Urbana church in the late seventies to take up his residence in Wichita, Kansas.

Judge Ayres’ term of office was from 1857 to 1887; Mr. Bennett served the church from 1866 to 1888 when he died, and Mr. Hubbard’s term of office, barring an interval of four years when he returned to Connecticut, was from 1857 to 1902.

These men were the sole ruling elders of the church during almost half of its history. They were gentlemen of the old school, in manners and dress, these three. It is quite unlikely that any one of them ever wore a soft collar or a colored shirt. They carried the church over its difficulties; they came forward generously with contributions when financial ruin seemed imminent; they were active in season and out of season, and the church today owes to them its life.

One of his friends, writing of Mr. Hubbard at the time of his death, says:

"He was an elder indeed as well as in word. This church owes to him far more than its present members, who have come here in recent years, know anything about. In the days of his prime, ere the weakness and infirmities of old age laid hands upon him, he was a veritable pillar of strength in this organization. Many is the time, when, but for him, the doors of the church would have closed. He knew no limit in his liberality but the needs of the church. I am told by more than one willing witness that he has given as high as five or six hundred dollars a year to keep the candle of the Lord burning on this altar. As one of his old friends said to me yesterday, 'Mr. Hubbard stood on the outer wall for many years, and bore the brunt of battle for the church. Nay', he went on, 'it is not too much to say that but for Mr. Hubbard's liberality, this church would not be in existence as an organization now.'

"Often he has taken out of his pocket, funds to pay the pastor's salary and to meet arrearages—money that others had promised and failed to pay. And in all his liberality, his lifelong habit of silence about what he did, often left the church in ignorance of what he had done. To this day there are few in the church who know any thing like the extent of that liberality. His habits of silence made him averse to public demonstrations of his religious experiences. His faith was his own between him and his God, but the life of public and private righteousness which he lived, tells the story."

The resolutions of the Session following Mr. Hubbard's death may well have a place here:

"Whereas, God has seen fit to take from our midst, Thomas S. Hubbard, charter member of this church, and for over forty years elder, "Resolved, that we hereby recognize and praise God for the long service and faithful labors of our co-elder, Mr. Thomas S. Hubbard. We desire to record our high estimate of his honorable place as a citizen in this community, of his faithful performance of duty as an elder in this church, and of the sterling worth of his Christian character.

"There were many years when he was the chief support of the church. There were periods of weakness in the life of this church, when but for his generous giving and unstinted activity as elder and trustee, the candle would have gone out on the Lord's altar in this organization. And while during recent years, owing to the weakness of ill health and of advancing age, he was not able to do as much as he once did, yet he has ever evinced an untiring interest in the welfare of the church, and continued his generous support. His help and strength we hereby gratefully acknowledge, and for his Christian life and character we humbly praise God."

Shortly after the Reverend Mr. Stryker had organized the church he was engaged to preach for the new congregation, and he returned to Ohio to bring his family to Urbana. He began his ministrations in March, 1857. At first only Sunday afternoon services were held, and these took place in the old Baptist church which, in 1895, was removed to give place to the present church which stands on the northwest corner of Race and Illinois Streets. The organization started in a very humble way. Mr. Hubbard, in writing of their simple beginning, says:

"Our little church prospered, and many were added to our numbers. Our social meetings were well attended, and all worked in the interests of this branch of Zion."

The story is told that at one of the early communion services of the newly organized church, Mrs. H. C. Butler, of Meriden, Connecticut, mother of Mrs. T. S. Hubbard, was a visitor at the service. The communion service at that time consisted of ordinary table china, and the wine was passed in glass tumblers. Mrs. Butler was deeply touched at the sight of the humble service, and, when she returned home, she and some friends whose interest she solicited, sent to the church the silver service part of which is still in existence and which was used for more than thirty years.

Mrs. Stryker, wife of the pastor, died in 1859, leaving six little children, the youngest but a few hours old. Her death was a great loss to the church. She and her youngest child are buried in Mount Hope cemetery. Mr. Stryker remained as pastor of the church until shortly after the opening of the Civil War. The call for volunteers in 1861 took away into the army many of the men of the church and made the financial support of the church impossible. Mr. Stryker tried to enlist as a chaplain, but was not able to do so. He sent his family back to Connecticut and obtained employment with the Bible society. The church held no regular services from July, 1861, until July, 1866. The war was over then, business became more prosperous, and those members who remained began at once to make preparations for the building of a house of their own. The membership at the time of the reorganization which was made at the close of the war numbered about sixty. There is no mention of the exact time when the Reverend C. D. Nott, the first pastor of the church after the war, came to Urbana, but it is likely that he took charge of the congregation early in 1866. The first mention of his name in the Session minutes is November, 1867.

The memorandum of a church meeting held July 14 or 15, 1866, shows that the following were present:

A. M. Ayres, T. R. Leal, W. J. Ermentrout, O. O. Alexander, S. M. Noel, George Nichols, and Mahlon Lindley. Mr. Ermentrout was elected chairman of the meeting and Mr. Alexander secretary. Mr. Ermentrout, Mr. Ayres, Mr. C. R. Griggs, Mr. Alexander, and Mr. Leal were appointed members of a building committee. There was evidently, at this meeting, considerable discussion of plans for a new building.

Another meeting was called for the evening of July 16, at which time Mr. Ermentrout presided. At this meeting Mr. Noel and Mr. Thompson Elder were elected trustees for one year; Mr. George Nichol and Mr. A. P. Cunningham for two years; and Mr. Ermentrout and Mr. Alexander for three years. At this meeting, also, the society adopted as its seal the obverse of an American half dollar silver coin and voted that this seal be affixed to all papers requiring

the seal of the church. The use of this seal has long ago fallen into disuse and has been forgotten. The trustees were authorized and instructed to negotiate at the earliest practicable moment a loan of five hundred dollars from the "Committee to Aid in Erection of Church Edifices" of Chicago, Illinois.

On the fourteenth day of August, 1866, Joseph W. Sim and Sarah A. Sim, his wife, conveyed to the recently elected trustees of the church lots 2 and 3, block 6 of the J. W. Sim's addition to the town of Urbana. The consideration for this transfer was \$450. These lots are the two upon which the present church and the house immediately west of it now stand. The house at 604 West Green street became later the parsonage of the church.

On the 15th day of August, 1866, the trustees made a note to the "Committee to Aid in the Erection of Church Edifices," for the sum of \$500, being for money loaned and secured by mortgage which was executed on lot 3, block 6, of the property recently purchased from Mr. Sim. This mortgage was later cancelled and the note paid. There is evidence to show that the contract for the erection of the church was let to a Mr. Hendricks in October, 1866. A memorandum without date in the handwriting of Mr. O. O. Alexander gives the following itemized account of the cost of the church :

Contract.....	\$4,000.00
Sheeting.....	150.00
Tower.....	475.00
Graining.....	44.00
Fence.....	300.00
Walk.....	35.00
Lot.....	325.00
—.....	100.00
	\$5,429.00

The funds for the erection of the church were raised by subscription, and the list of subscribers with the amount which each contributed is still preserved. It gives some idea of the energy and persistence of those delegated to prosecute the work. It is a long list of familiar names to old residents of Urbana. It shows how generously and how generally the citizens of the two towns came to the support of the Presbyterians. The list includes the names of men of all creeds and of all walks of life, and shows how willingly people will sacrifice for a cause in which they have faith. One hundred dollars was a large sum of money sixty-five years ago, and yet many of these people gave that amount and in not a few instances several times that sum. There were Baptists and Methodists and Jews on the list and men and women of various faiths, and of no specific faith at all. It is interesting and heartening to repeat the names of some

of these subscribers, most of whom have been gone these many years: Mahlon Lindley, William Nichol, W. J. Ermentrout, A. P. Cunningham, C. R. Griggs, Wm. B. Webber, T. R. Leal, N. A. Riley, L. A. McLean, Frank Jaques, T. B. Carson, W. J. Foote, E. Blackshaw, S. T. Busey, M. Lowenstern, C. M. Sherfey, William Sim, O. O. Alexander, A. M. Ayers, T. S. Hubbard, H. M. Russell—what memories the mere mention of these names stirs up! The names of these men recall to us what the progress and development of Urbana owes to the former generations.

The first recorded minutes of the session bear the date of November 3, 1866. The minute is to the effect that no evening service be held until the new church was ready for occupancy. The remaining time was spent in discussing the religious condition of the church.

On December 1, 1866, fourteen members were received into the church. Among these was Aaron Bennett, who, until the time of his death in 1888, was a ruling elder of the congregation. According to the best information that can be obtained, the church building was dedicated on February 14, 1867, the Reverend J. H. Trowbridge preaching the dedication sermon. The salary of the Pastor, the Reverend C. D. Nott, was set at \$1,000 a year and house rent. This was an advance over what he had previously received. In the fall of 1867 the trustees bought the bell that rang out the times of service in the old church. It was obtained from VanDuzen & Lift, of Cincinnati, and cost thirty-eight cents a pound. The first funeral to occur in the church was that of Orley Foote, brother of Miss Eva Foote and Mrs. Julia R. Mathews, who died July 2, 1867.

On March 14, 1869, the Reverend Mr. Knott announced to the congregation his intention of resigning, and, at the meeting of the congregation a few days later, his resignation was accepted, and his connection with the church ended April 9, 1869. The church records show that thirty-four members were added to the roll during his ministry.

Five months later, September 15, 1869, a call was extended to the Reverend W. C. Smith, of Huntington, Indiana, to become the pastor of the church. He apparently accepted the call and came immediately. Both the Session minutes and those of the Board of Trustees are meager during the two years of Mr. Smith's incumbency. Twenty-five members were added to the church during these two years. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. Jas. S. McCullough, George W. Hubbard, the father of Julia Hubbard Miles, and oldest son of T. S. Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Kyle, Miss Martha Kyle's father and mother, Mrs. T. R. Leal, and Nancy Brown, known as "Grandma Brown," who was one of the first Sunday

school teachers of the church. Mrs. McCullough is still living in Urbana.

In March, 1871, at a Congregational meeting, it was voted to raise the sum of \$3,500 for the purpose of building a manse on the lot which the church owned immediately west of the building, and to meet some other financial obligations which were pressing, Messrs. W. J. Ermentrout, W. M. Goodwin, D. D. Cannon, T. R. Leal, and A. P. Cunningham were appointed a committee to solicit funds. Ten days later Mr. C. D. Webster was added to the committee. There is no further statement in the minutes as to how or where the money was raised, but later events would tend to show that the building was begun on a rather slender shoe string. However, the committee proceeded to erect the manse which was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies on November 3, 1871. In the meantime the pastor, the Reverend William C. Smith, had died, and the church was again without a shepherd.

There was little delay in calling a new pastor. On October 20, of the same year, the Reverend S. M. Morton accepted a call to become the pastor of the church. He was not regularly installed until the following October, and he continued in charge of the work of the church until November, 1874. A somewhat increased interest in missions was developed during Mr. Morton's pastorate, and fifty-four persons were added to the membership of the church. Among these were Eva A. Foote, Mrs. Emma Besore, Hattie I. Bennett, Jennie M. Vanderveer, and Edna Post Hubbard—women whose work for the welfare of the church for the rest of their lives, or during their active membership may well be remembered. Mr. A. P. Cunningham, who for many years had been a deacon of the church and an active supporter of all its interests, withdrew his membership in 1872, having his home and his business interest in Champaign, and joined the Champaign church.

Rumors were extant in August, 1872, that certain members of the congregation had wandered somewhat from the straight path and were bringing criticism and disgrace upon the church. Elder Hubbard was delegated to investigate the rumor and to report back to the Session. His report shortly afterward indicated that not everything was as it should be, and Elder Ayers was appointed to aid Elder Hubbard in his investigations. This committee reported that the case was serious and one which required the interposition of the Session.

"Common fame charges," they reported, "a member of this church with the sin of intemperance to the manifest injury of his own Christian standing and reputation, and to the flagrant reproach

of the church of Christ, at sundry times prior to this date, and within the last twelve months, as may be proved by the following witnesses." The names of the witnesses were given in the report.

When it came to the summoning of these witnesses, however, they were loath to make specific statements and their replies to questions were often evasive and indefinite. In view of the failure of one witness to appear when he was called, and the refusal of another to testify, the original committee was reappointed to secure more testimony. Before this additional evidence could be collected, however, the accused man wrote a letter to the Session expressing his disgust with the whole proceeding and indicating that he felt quite able to attend to his own business.

"Therefore, I notify you," he wrote, "that I wish my name erased from the books of the First Presbyterian Church, as I have concluded not to attend church and be treated as I have been by this church. I think I can go to some other place of worship and be treated with a little more respect, and get just as good information as at the First Presbyterian."

There was finally no doubt of his complete and repeated guilt, and the following action was taken:

"The Session having deliberately considered the testimony in the case of, a member of this church, charged by common fame with the sin of intemperance, as set forth in the charge, does judge and decide that the charge has been proved, and that the said ought to be and hereby is, suspended from the communion of the church until he shall give satisfactory evidence of repentance."

The clerk was instructed to furnish the accused with a copy of this action, and, as there is no record that the derelict member ever expressed remorse or repentance, his name was never restored to the church roll.

At two other times during the pastorate of Mr. Morton rumors reached the ears of the officers of the church of the intemperance of individual members, and a committee was appointed to look into the facts. Before confirmation of these facts could be secured one of the accused withdrew his membership from the church and, with his wife, attached himself to an older sister organization in Urbana. It appears from this that drinking to excess was not unknown fifty years ago or more, even before the Volstead act became operative.

About this time also, a committee was appointed to wait upon certain members who "had absented themselves for a considerable time from the regular church services, and to try to ascertain their reasons for so doing." These early officers of the church took their duties seriously—more seriously, possibly, than their successors do today—and felt that they had an obligation to bring back into the fold the wandering or the lost sheep. In October, 1874, Mr. Morton presented his resignation as pastor, and it was accepted. The finances

of the church were not at this time in perfect condition, it appears, for a minute of the Board of Trustees indicates that there was owing the pastor when he resigned the sum of \$229.75, which was at that time nearly one-fourth of his yearly stipend. There were other debts, also, aggregating almost \$2,000 with little more than one hundred dollars in the treasury. The total annual income of the church in 1874 was \$1,353.06.

The congregation was without a pastor until the spring of 1875. On January 31, 1875, the congregation voted to extend a call to the Reverend J. H. Miller, of Sedalia, Missouri, at a salary of \$1,200 a year, but he apparently did not accept. The financial report of Mr. C. D. Webster, acting treasurer, shows that Mr. Miller was paid the sum of \$26.50 from the church treasury, which sum probably covered his railroad expenses to and from Sedalia, Missouri. He looked the ground over and turned away. There is another interesting item of expense in Mr. Webster's account. Professor Carlos Taft of the University of Illinois, father of Mr. Lorado Taft, noted sculptor, was paid the sum of fifty-one dollars for ten sermons during the time that the church was without a regular supply. Apparently preachers were not over-paid in 1875.

The Reverend Farel Hart served the church from April, 1875, until December of that same year. He was to be paid at the rate of \$1,000 a year and to have the free use of a study room in the parsonage which had been rented to Mr. J. E. Hunt at \$20 a month. Apparently Mr. Farel was unmarried.

The record, which during these years was very incomplete, indicates that he was drowned in Lake Michigan in December, 1875.

There are no minutes of the Session from October, 1875, until April, 1879. The explanation of this lapse, in the handwriting of Judge A. M. Ayres, is that during that interval the church had been often without pastor and without supply; consequently no record had been kept.

The minutes of the Board of Trustees, however, furnish considerable information during this period. The church added to its income in April, 1875, by charging the German Methodists three dollars for the use of the church.

At a congregational meeting, on January 7, 1876, it was voted to extend a call to the Reverend Mr. D. W. Evans to become the stated supply of the church for the period of one year at a salary of \$1,000 and the use of the parsonage. Mr. C. D. Webster and Mr. W. J. Ermentrout made up the committee to acquaint Mr. Evans with the action of the congregation. Mr. Evans accepted the offer of the committee with the understanding that he might occupy the parsonage after May 1, at which time Mr. J. E. Hunt's lease expired.

The treasurer's report for the year 1875 was interesting:

TREASURER'S REPORT JANUARY 1, 1875,

TO DECEMBER 31, 1875.

Balance on hand January 1, 1875.....	\$ 44.23
Received in envelopes.....	895.50
Received from Sociables.....	63.20
Received from German M. E. Church.....	3.00
Received from J. E. Hunt, rent.....	140.00

Total Accounts.....	\$1,145.93
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Paid interest	\$ 128.00
Paid sundry preachers.....	81.50
Paid S. M. Morton in full.....	124.15
Paid F. Hart in full.....	673.08
Paid printing bill.....	24.00
Paid for furniture.....	28.90
Paid taxes.....	21.08
Paid janitor.....	30.00
Paid stationery, etc.....	18.25
Paid for wood.....	7.50
Paid for gas.....	19.60
Paid for insurance.....	66.75
Paid for drain.....	8.00

Total Paid out.....	\$1,230.21
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Balance due Treasurer.....	\$ 84.38
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Liabilities:

Burpee note.....	\$1,100.00
School note.....	765.00
Interest now due.....	76.50
Treasurer.....	84.38

Total.....	\$2,025.88
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The available resources were \$30.00. It will be noted that the rate of interest charged on the church debt was ten per cent and that the church's liabilities were increasing rather than diminishing. It was suggested at the January meeting of the Board that Mrs. S. J. Spence, a member of the church, had one hundred dollars which she was willing to loan to the church at ten per cent interest, and the treasurer was directed to secure this amount, from which he should first pay the interest due on the church's debt, and then to credit himself with the balance.

Between January 11, 1876, and September 12 of the same year there were seven called meetings of the Board of Trustees, without at any time being a quorum present and so with no possibility of transacting business. Mr. T. S. Hubbard and Mr. C. D. Webster were the faithful members who were always present. At the meeting

on September 12, it was voted to call the attention of the society "to the very deplorable state of finances, in a public meeting, as the circulars and statements do not have the desired effect." This called meeting was held on September 17, 1876, at which "the treasurer made statement of receipts for the past three years and called attention to the fact that of the \$2,000 needed for this year, only about one-third has thus far been paid." The total collections for the year previous amounted to only \$677.13 of which amount the six trustees contributed \$374.26. Within two years the number of contributors had dropped from fifty-five to thirty-one. General interest in church affairs was waning, the church debt was increasing, and the life of the church was threatened. Mr. J. E. Hunt and Mr. A. Spence were appointed a committee personally to see every member of the congregation and to lay the situation before them as well as to collect funds.

Two months later the Board voted to address a circular to all members of the congregation with a view of ascertaining "whether or not preaching can be sustained the coming year," and a congregational meeting was called for November 22. At this meeting the financial condition of the church was presented and Mr. A. Spence and Mr. J. E. Hunt were appointed a committee to take pledges and to report to an adjourned meeting of the congregation a week later. Two weeks later the committee reported that \$1350 in pledges had been secured and this was thought sufficient to continue the work of the church. There were seven meetings of the Board of Trustees between December 27, 1876, and August 14, 1877, without a quorum present or any business being transacted. Such a record does not indicate particular activity on the part of the officers in charge. At the meeting of August 14, it was voted to call a congregational meeting for August 26, 1877, to consult as to the future of the church. At this meeting the end of the fiscal year was changed from December 31 to March 31. The congregation voted also to extend a call to Mr. D. W. Evans for one year only. The finances of the church were in too precarious a situation to do more than this.

The inference may be drawn from some of the minutes of the Board that during this year there were attempts made to sever the pastoral relation between Mr. Evans and the church. There was much dissatisfaction. The Trustees, however, voted in December that the action taken in August calling Mr. Evans for the period of one year was binding and could not be set aside without further legislation. Mr. T. S. Hubbard, who for many years had been one of the most faithful members of the Board of Trustees, never missing a meeting so far as the records show, resigned, alleging pressure of business obligations, but the congregation refused to

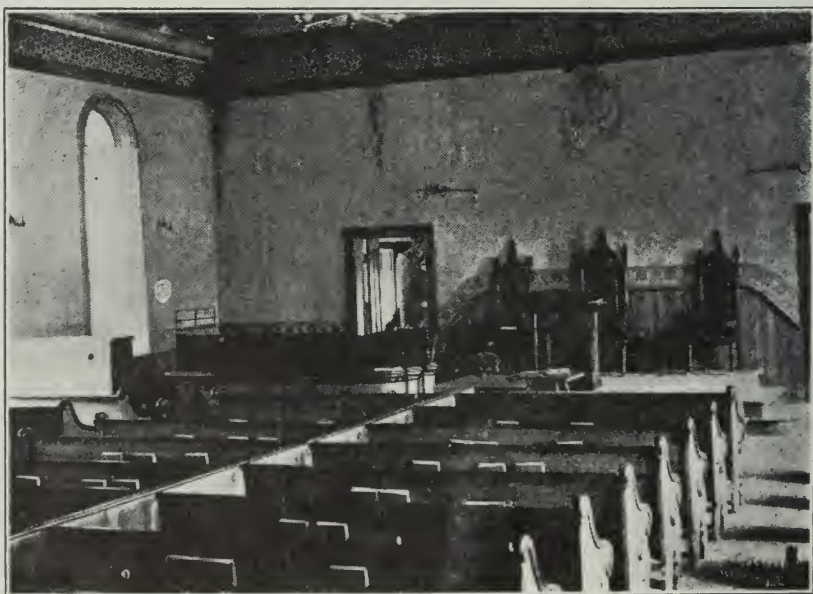
accept his resignation. The finances of the church were becoming more and more involved, and on February 24, 1878, a congregational meeting was called to go into financial matters. An attempt had previously been made to sell the parsonage for \$2,000, but nothing had come of it, and it had not been possible to negotiate a new loan. The report of the treasurer showed that there was due, or coming due within a few weeks, an amount aggregating \$2,265, with no apparent way of meeting the obligation.

There was some misunderstanding between Mr. Evans and the Trustees as to the amount owing him, and a very natural dissatisfaction on his part that one-fourth of his salary for the past year was unpaid. This misunderstanding caused considerable correspondence between the pastor, the pastor's wife and various members of the congregation. The pastor presented a bill of extras which he thought the trustees should pay and in lieu of their refusal to do so, packed up two carpets, a chair and a sofa belonging to the church and shipped these with his household goods to his next charge. It is quite conceivable that a man whose regular salary was quite an uncertain quantity might have been excused for laying his hands on any movable property that was in sight, and if two old carpets, a second-hand chair, and a sofa were thought adequate to cancel in his mind the church's financial obligations—well, why not? It is interesting to note that there are no recorded additions to the church from 1876 to 1879.

The Board of Trustees did no more business after March 27, until June 30, when, by invitation, the Reverend Mr. O. B. Thayer, who had been acting as supply on Sunday afternoons since the resignation of Mr. Evans, was asked to become the regular pastor of the church. Mr. Thayer did not wish to give up the regular charge which he had but agreed, if proper arrangements could be made, to undertake the work in Urbana in the afternoon or evening. The story is told that Mr. Thayer's chief interest outside of the pulpit lay in thoroughbred horses of which he owned several. One of the "arrangements" which he required to be made before he would accept the pastorate in Urbana, was that a stable should be erected behind the parsonage in which his horses might be properly housed. The record does not specifically state what action was taken, but, apparently, the stable was built. Mr. Thayer acted as supply until January 11, 1879, when he made a proposition to the Trustees to preach an afternoon sermon for \$400 a year or to come as a full time pastor for \$800. This offer the Trustees did not feel that they could accept. At a later meeting it was suggested that he be offered \$600 a year and the use of the parsonage for full time service. In



THE OLD CHURCH



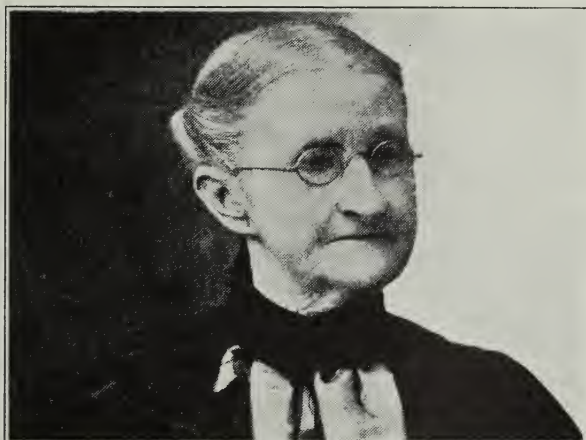
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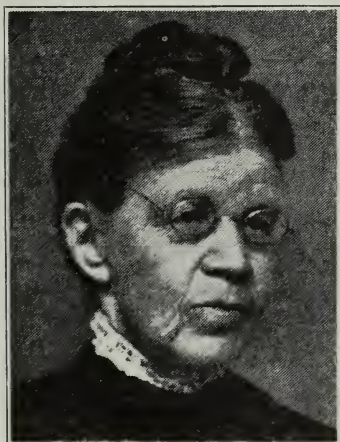
MRS. JANE W. HUBBARD



MRS. NANCY (GRANDMA) BROWN



MRS. ISABELLE HUNT



MRS. EMELINE LEAL



MRS. MARY E. BUSEY

January, 1880, the matter of Mr. Thayer's compensation again came up, and it was agreed that he be paid a salary of \$650 a year in weekly installments for one sermon each Sunday. On January 16, 1881, a congregational meeting was held to consider the desirability of retaining Mr. Thayer for another year. The vote was eighteen to eight in favor of doing so, and Mr. Kyle was appointed to confer with Mr. Thayer on the matter. A few days later Mr. Kyle reported to the Board of Trustees that he had seen Mr. Thayer, but that Mr. Thayer could not accept for any length of time, nor could he make at present any satisfactory arrangement. The Board decided "to wait for something to turn up."

A few weeks later a committee was appointed to solicit funds to pay Mr. Thayer as long as he was willing to stay. He agreed to accept ten dollars a Sunday until he could find another place. Six hundred and thirty-nine dollars and thirty cents were raised in subscriptions and "all said to be good." In the meantime the Board of Trustees had sold the parsonage to Mrs. J. E. Hunt for \$1,500, and applied this sum upon the old church debt. Mr. Thayer finished his work with the church in the summer of 1881 and accepted a call to the church at Clinton, Illinois.

In August, 1881, the Reverend J. Paysen Mills came and preached for the congregation until April of the next spring. A few accessions to the church were made during his pastorate, but matters seemed much as they had been for several years. There was little spiritual or financial activity manifested. The Hubbards, the Besores, the Leals, the Websters, the Kyles, the Snyders, the Smiths, the Ayers, and a few others still did their best to arouse interest and to bring the congregation out of its apparent lethargy. The church had no regular pastor from April, 1882, until July, 1883, though there were occasional services when supplies could be secured.

In June, 1883, the Reverend George L. McNutt from Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, preached for the church and later received a unanimous call to become the regular pastor and to divide his time between the Urbana church and the Presbyterian church at Homer, preaching alternate Sundays at each place. He was to receive \$450 from the Homer church and \$550 from Urbana. At the end of a year the Urbana church decided to engage Mr. McNutt for the entire time, and this was done at a salary of \$900, he agreeing to devote himself entirely to the interests of the Urbana church. Mr. McNutt was a brilliant speaker, with a magnetic personality, and the attendance at church services under his ministration increased rapidly. Through his efforts the church was at last freed

from the debt which for years had hung over it like an old man of the sea.

Mr. Hubbard tells very interestingly the story of the paying of this last \$866.50 which remained from the original debt of \$2300 which had been the bugbear of the church for nearly ten years.

"In January, 1885," he says, "Reverend McNutt, having only a short time before learned that this church was burdened with debt, resolved that by some means this debt must go down, if only a little at a time. About the first of January he adopted the plan of taking a collection each Sabbath evening, and setting aside the proceeds to apply on the debt. About \$24 was raised in this way during the six months following.

"On Sabbath morning, July 5, 1885, Reverend McNutt astonished his congregation by stating from the desk that if they could, before Tuesday evening, raise \$500, the debt should be paid, he knew where he could get \$300 as soon as the church raised their part. On the same Sabbath afternoon the entire body of Trustees met at F. M. Wright's residence to consult in regard to the best way of raising money for the debt. Reverend McNutt and M. S. Parks were appointed a committee to canvas for subscriptions for the payment of said debt. The committee were well received; the people responded liberally, and the required amount was raised before four P. M. Tuesday, July 7, 1885. Thus the mortgage that for many years annoyed us was cancelled."

The story does not tell where the \$300 came from, but in all likelihood Mr. Hubbard paid it.

In November, 1885, Mr. McNutt accepted a call from the Fourth Presbyterian church of Indianapolis, Indiana, and the Urbana church was again without a pastor.

In February, 1886, the Reverend Otis A. Smith was employed to supply the pulpit for two months, and after April 1, to give his entire time to the work of the church until the following September. For these seven months he was to receive a salary of \$500.

At a congregational meeting held October 24, 1886, the congregation voted in favor of calling the Reverend M. R. Paradis of Farmer City, to become its regular pastor. A committee consisting of J. E. Hunt, James Matheson, and John A. Glover was appointed to decide the matter. At a later meeting the committee reported favorably upon Mr. Paradis, and a committee consisting of Mrs. Matheson, Mrs. Isabel Hunt and Mrs. Monett were appointed to interview Mr. Paradis and discover under what conditions he would come to Urbana. This action seems to mark the first active entrance of the women of the church into its official business, and it marks also the beginning of a brighter financial outlook for the church. They were empowered to offer Mr. Paradis a salary of \$800 a year, with an additional allowance of \$150 for house rent. Mr. Paradis accepted this offer and immediately took up his work.

With the coming of the Paradis' the church took on new life.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Paradis were musical, and they had a keen interest in young people of which there were beginning to be a good many, both from the University and from the town. The congregation had always contained people with good voices—the Websters, the Littles, the Weber girls, Maude Lloyd (Hess), Luella Phillips (Renner), Chas. D. Kiler, Ed. Hammer, Hattie Bennett (Knowlton), James Matheson, the Monetts, and others. Most of them were still in the church when the Paradis' came and helped to make the choir an attractive part of the church service.

A fortunate circumstance occurred at this time. Mr. and Mrs. John A. Glover came into the community in December, 1885. They were both thoroughly trained musicians. They were young and energetic and they entered at once enthusiastically into the life of the church. They became a part of the choir and, later, Mr. Glover was its leader and for more than twenty years he directed the music of the church while Mrs. Glover presided at the organ. They paid for their own music and for most of the time labored without the slightest compensation. In 1887 Mr. Glover was elected to the office of ruling elder—a position which he held for twenty-nine years. He was also for twenty years or more a member of the Board of Trustees. Immediately upon coming into the church Mrs. Glover became active in the work of the Sunday School, the Women's Missionary society and the Ladies' Aid Society. When Mrs. Isabella Hunt, who from the organization of the church had been in charge of the primary department, was forced through failing strength and advancing age to give up the work, Mrs. Glover took her place and has been in charge of it most of the time since then. The church can never pay the debt of gratitude it owes to Mr. and Mrs. Glover for their more than forty-five years of generous, faithful service.

There was very little activity in the church on the part of the young people during the early history of the organization, if indeed, there were many young people in the group. At least the church roll shows very few. Church affairs were run by the gray heads in the early days,—by the men and women of experience. The young people, like children, were to be seen, but it was not expected that they should be heard.

In the early eighties the Christian Endeavor society was spreading rapidly over the country, and the power and influence of young men and women in the church was being felt. It was Julia Hubbard Insley, the youngest daughter of Elder T. S. Hubbard for so many years an influential officer of the church, who first, in the spring of 1888, agitated an organization of young people. Under her leader-

ship and with the cooperation of Mrs. Paradis, our present society was formed.

The first officers as given in the records of the Board of Trustees were as follows:

President.....	T. A. Clark
Recording Secretary.....	Chas. D. Kiler
Corresponding Secretary.....	Minnie Kyle
Treasurer.....	Mrs. M. R. Paradis
Prayer Meeting Committee.....	Mrs. Paradis Philemon Bevis J. A. Glover
Lookout Committee.....	T. A. Clark Minnie Kyle Hortense Call Mary Leal

There were twenty-eight active and twenty-two associate members at the outset.

These young people—some of them in high school and many of them in college—held weekly meetings on Sunday evening, swelled the attendance at the morning service and at the Wednesday evening prayer meeting, and began at once to be felt in the active life of the church.

The Reverend and Mrs. Paradis stimulated this work and interest of the young people and it became more important. Mrs. Paradis had few equals in putting young people to work, in arousing their enthusiasm and keeping it aroused. She did a great deal of the planning while giving them the impression that they were themselves doing it. There was much social life about the manse during these years on Sunday evening and during the week, and since neither the two towns nor the University furnished a great many diversions, this social life within the church was a godsend. How, on their slender salary, the pastor and his wife were able to feed so many hungry young people as they did on Sunday evenings it is difficult to understand.

It is interesting to recall the names of some of these early members, many of whom, after forty years, are still active workers in this or other churches:

Maude Lloyd, Ada Williams, Minnie and Martha Kyle, Julia Hubbard, Alice Bradshaw, Lydia Hart, Grace and Leonora Briggs, Mary, Rose, and Sophie Leal, Edith McHugh, Addie and Carrie Nichol, Belle Norton, Maude Nichols, Mary and Bess Brownlee, Mary Howe, Marietta Busey, Emma Seibert, Anna Lightbody.

And of the young men there were Bert Ijams, Frank Levy, Charles D. Kiler, Edward and Ernest Hunt, George Clinton, Will

Martin, Clarence Shamel, Phil and Albon Bevis—it is impossible after so many years to name them all.

They soon realized that the general audience room of the church was an inadequate place in which to hold their weekly meeting; it disturbed the members of the congregation coming in for the regular service, and it left no time for social intercourse after the regular evening program was finished.

They determined to have a room of their own. To raise the money necessary for this purpose each member made a small donation, a series of entertainments was given—concerts, readings and so on,—and a final grand “Feast of Nations” in Busey’s hall on the north side of Main Street. Having gained the consent of the Board of Trustees, an addition to the north end of the church was begun during the summer of 1892, and this room was formally dedicated in December of that year. The report of the treasurer of the society showed that the total assets of the society were \$628.00 and that the cost of the addition and its furnishings had aggregated \$607.00. There were, herefore, \$21.00 in the treasury when the addition was completed.

Shortly after the coming of Mr. Paradis a rather long series of evangelistic meetings was held in the church. These were in charge of a Mr. Bischoff, of Springfield, Illinois. “Happy Bisch” he called himself. A Mr. Powell had charge of the music. Mr. Bischoff was an illiterate, incoherent speaker, whose crude informality did violence to the feelings of many of the reserved, dignified Presbyterians, but his wandering, disconnected utterances had a strangely magnetic appeal to many in his audiences, and the result of his efforts brought many into the church. Some of those who were influenced by his preaching joined other churches in town, but on January 28, 1887, fifty-three members were admitted into the church, and within the next few weeks a score of others were added to the church roll.

The Board of Elders, which from the establishment of the church had consisted of Judge A. M. Ayres, T. S. Hubbard and Aaron Bennett, and (for a time) E. M. Noel, was, in 1887, increased by the election of John A. Glover and John D. Pulliam. In July, 1887, Mr. Paradis was given six months leave of absence in order that he and Mrs. Paradis might travel in Europe. The Reverend H. McVay, of Chatsworth, Illinois, acted as stated supply during Mr. Paradis’ absence. In March, 1889, the session authorized its clerk to draft a letter which should be sent to certain members whose attendance upon regular church services was not such as might be desired. Perhaps such a procedure might today prove helpful.

The record of the church's contribution to missions during these years is very interesting. In March, 1887, the sum of twenty dollars was divided among the various missionary interests of the church, and two years later the missionary contributions had grown to thirty-three dollars. The reports of the various church officers presented at the congregational meeting in April, 1890, showed that the total financial receipts for the year aggregated \$1,551.52. Of this amount the Young People's Society had contributed \$91.02, the Ladies' Aid society \$237.95, the Missionary Society \$33.00, the Sunday School \$29.83, and Mrs. Isabelle Hunt's infant class \$40.00. It looked very much as if "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" the older members of the church should have learned something. At this meeting the name of Mr. G. W. Yates was added to the Board of Elders.

On December 7, 1890, Mr. Paradis presented his resignation as pastor. His health was not good, and his physician had advised him to try some other sort of work. A position had opened to him at the University in the department of French, and he thought it wise to accept. It was with real regret that the congregation saw him leave. He had not been a wonderful preacher, but as an organizer and as a pastor he could hardly be excelled, and in his wife he had a coadjutor par excellence. Under his ministry the church building had been put into better physical condition, the church membership had increased, there had been strengthening of church unity and an awakened interest in all departments of church activity.

The congregation was not ready to choose a successor to Mr. Paradis, until the last of May, 1891. At the congregational meeting held on May 24, the Reverend E. P. Morse of Watseka, Illinois, was the unanimous choice of the church. Mr. Morse's term of service was from July 5, 1891, to October 24, 1893. The church increased in its efficiency and unity during his pastorate, though few names were added to the church roll. The financial receipts for the year ending March 31, 1893, were \$2,235.63, the largest amount ever received in the history of the church up to that date.

It was six months after the resignation of Mr. Morse before the congregation was again ready to call a pastor. The constant interregnums which existed between pastorates was extremely bad, for as these occurred the interest in church affairs waned, and a certain inertia took possession of the members. Contributions were fewer and smaller, and the church roll showed infrequent additions.

On May 3, 1894, at a church meeting it was voted to extend a call to the Reverend G. L. McNutt to supply the pulpit at a salary of \$1,200 a year. "Auntie" Russell (Mrs. H. M.) had apparently

been responsible for soliciting contributions from the members for defraying Mr. McNutt's salary, and so successful had she been in her efforts, "Inasmuch as the subscription list," according to the record, "was thought the best of any before it," that Mrs. T. S. Hubbard was authorized to buy a chair to be presented to Mrs. Russell, this to be paid for by the officers of the church, "as a token of gratitude for her efforts in raising said amount."

Shortly after Mr. McNutt's coming, the subject of building a parsonage began to be agitated. Mr. McNutt was appointed to act in the matter with the understanding that he might associate with himself such others as he desired. Before the end of 1894 plans and specifications for a new parsonage were submitted to the Board of Trustees and these were approved. Mr. Leal was put in charge of the excavation for the building on a lot at the corner of California and Coler Avenues, donated by Mr. T. S. Hubbard who, as was usual in such cases, came at once to the front. The heating of the house was easily arranged when Colonel S. T. Busey paid for the furnace. Bids on the new house were opened January 10, 1895. The lowest bid was \$1,587 and Messrs. Ahlrich, Besore and G. W. Hubbard were appointed a building committee. The record at this time does not show how the building was financed, but inference may be drawn from later statements that such money as was secured through the solicitations of Mrs. H. M. Russell and Mr. McNutt was immediately applied to the building debt, while the remaining sum was carried in the Citizen's Building and Loan Association. A part of these dues was paid by the Ladies' Aid Society.

There was a good deal of agitation during the second period of Mr. McNutt's regime. Much that happened it would be neither kind nor helpful to repeat. The situation might be explained, possibly, by saying that Mr. McNutt was a rare genius and a remarkable pastor without a balance wheel. He had no idea of the limitations of money. The Trustees attempted, unasked, to manage his financial affairs for him, and were informed that he wished to be allowed that privilege himself. For a time, part of his salary was paid to him directly, and the remainder applied upon his debts. This procedure was naturally unsatisfactory both to the Trustees and to the Pastor.

"I must respectfully insist," he wrote the Trustees, "that while I remain pastor of this church, my personal relations in the community can not be a matter of discussion or action in any way whatever, by any organization of the church."

On June 13, 1898, at a joint meeting of the Session of the church and the Board of Trustees it was resolved that a proposition which Mr. McNutt had presented to the Board regarding his future salary could not be accepted. It was further voted that the salary of the

pastor be fixed at twelve hundred dollars a year to be paid as follows: Twenty dollars a month to the Loan Association in lieu of rent; fifty dollars a month in cash to the pastor, and the balance to be payable at the end of the year either in cash or its equivalent, and that the pastor shall render such service as the Session of the church shall direct. This arrangement was intended to help Mr. McNutt more easily and surely to meet his financial obligations.

This proposition was not satisfactory to Mr. McNutt, and he submitted his resignation. The Reverend G. R. Smith acted as stated supply during this pastoral interregnum, and for a time the Sunday evening service was discontinued.

On December 4, 1898, the congregation voted to extend a call to the Reverend George E. Hunt, of Chicago, to become pastor of the church. He was installed May 10, 1899. He was an aggressive, broad-minded man who saw a great opportunity in the Urbana church as no one else, apparently, had previously done. His ministry was tremendously strong and efficient. A new spirit seemed to take possession of the church and large numbers were added to the membership.

With his coming the character of the congregation changed. Until the time of Mr. Paradis' pastorate the congregation was composed almost entirely of the business and working people of Urbana. Almost no one connected with the University, young or old, had his name on the church roll, or was actively engaged in its work. The Congregational and the Presbyterian churches in Champaign had strong University enrollments, and the Baptist church and the Methodist were not without their University adherents. With Mr. Paradis' coming many University students and other young people were attracted to the church, but it was not until Mr. Hunt's time that the University faculty drifted to Urbana. About 1900 the student enrollment at the University was rapidly increasing, new residence districts were opened up in Urbana, and it was not long until only the old-time members of the faculty clung to Champaign. The church roll during Mr. Hunt's pastorate showed the names of Professor E. B. Greene, Professor M. B. Hammond, Professor W. D. Pence, Professor J. H. Pettit, Professor H. W. Mumford, Miss Isabel Bevier, Mr. H. L. Coar, Mr. G. P. Clinton, Mr. J. Q. Adams, Mr. C. D. McIlane, Professor C. T. Knipp, with the names of scores of University young people and less influential members of the faculty. Mr. Hunt made the most of these new accessions, and at once put many of them officially to work.

Through the death of Miss Etta Bowen, sister of Mrs. S. T. Busey, the church was left \$1,000, it being stipulated in Miss

Bowen's will that this sum should be used toward the erection of a new church building.

On December 23, 1900, Mr. George Besore for many years a member of the Board of Trustees passed away. The Board minutes show the following note:

"Resolved, That in his death the Presbyterian church and the Board of Trustees sustains the loss of an earnest and loyal member, always devoted to their best interests, a constant and untiring worker in the church's behalf, inspiring its members to better endeavor by his enthusiasm and counsel, and always imbued with a fine spirit of kindness and Christian fellowship, which endeared him to all who knew him."

Early in the spring of 1901 the committee which on February 10 had been appointed to canvass for funds for a new church, reported that they had secured pledges aggregating \$15,000, and that they felt that it would be safe to begin the building. A building committee consisting of John A. Glover, Mrs. S. T. Busey, T. R. Leal, George W. Hubbard and Mrs. F. M. Wright was appointed. Quotations from the report of that committee presented at the annual church meeting, May 7, 1902, will give the interesting details of that campaign better than they could be presented in any other way:

"STATEMENT OF FINANCE AND BUILDING COMMITTEE
FOR ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING MAY 7, 1902.

"The movement for a new church building started something more than two years ago, but although the Ladies' Society had been working on a fund for the building probably three years, no definite action was taken until February 10 of last year, when at a Congregational meeting it was decided to go ahead with the work of soliciting for funds, and if possible start the new building. At that meeting a Finance Committee was appointed, consisting of Mrs. S. T. Busey, Mrs. Royal Wright, Geo. W. Hubbard, T. A. Burt, T. R. Leal, Jno. A. Glover, E. B. Greene, C. W. Tooke and H. L. Coar. At the first meeting of the Finance Committee Mrs. S. T. Busey was made President and John A. Glover Secretary and Treasurer. The fund started with a bequest of Miss Etta Bowen of \$1,000.00 and contributions by Col. and Mrs. Busey of \$4,000.00 and the Ladies' Society of \$1,000.00. The Committee decided at the outset to make as a condition of the pledge, a subscription list of \$15,000.00 within ninety days from February 15, and it was decided that no start should be made toward building until this amount had been fully pledged. It is impossible, in the brief space allotted to this report, to tell of the immense amount of work performed by the members of this committee, to tell of the times of weariness, discouragement and depression and on the other hand to tell of some of the many joyous and unexpected surprises. Each member of the committee was working under pressure, a full head of steam on, as the time was so short, but it is evident that their work was effective from the fact that half a month before the expiration of the ninety days the amount necessary to secure the pledges, \$15,000.00 was assured, and, on April 29, the following Building Committee was appointed: Mr. Jno. A. Glover, Mrs. S. T. Busey, Mrs. F. M. Wright, Mr. T. R. Leal and Mr. Geo. W. Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard was elected Chairman and Mr. Glover Secretary. The old church

building was sold, the main building to Mr. F. L. Peterson and the rear addition to Mr. M. A. Dewey, and the work of taking it down was begun June 3. Mr. Joseph Royer was appointed architect and superintendent of building May 14, and the contract for the building was let August 17 to F. H. Jahr for \$15,000.00.

"During the summer the Finance Committee did little soliciting as four of the members of that committee were on the Building committee and were busy along the building lines. Up to May 20 a little over \$16,000.00 had been subscribed. It was estimated at that time that it would be necessary to raise about \$4,000.00 in order to complete the church and furnish it. The ground seemed to have been worked over very thoroughly, and the outlook was not promising. It was at this time that Mrs. S. T. Busey, for her children, made the proposition to furnish a pipe organ if the committee raised the necessary amount to complete the church so that it could be dedicated free of debt. This proposition was a great incentive and put new heart into the work, and it was decided to start out with a new list, amounts subscribed to be made payable June 1 and December 1, 1902. John A. Glover and T. A. Burt were appointed a special soliciting committee to have charge of raising the last \$4,000.00. In this brief report it would take too long to recite the manner of raising this last list. Suffice it to say that about \$2,500.00 of the amount was subscribed by those who had already given and of the balance something over \$500.00 came through the Ladies' Society—which they had received from friends outside—provisionally raised up for the occasion, and the remainder from friends and neighbors not connected with our church.

"The total amount on both subscription lists is \$20,395.40. The work of the Finance and Building Committees is not yet done, as there is yet some work to be completed on the building before its final acceptance, and the work of the Finance Committee must continue until all pledges are paid in and accounted for, but we hope that the work of both committees so far as completed will meet with the approval of the congregation."

The total cost of the church was \$21,500, exclusive of the organ. Dignified services extending from Sunday morning, April 20, 1902, to Wednesday evening, April 23, marked the dedication of the new church. These services, the Session minutes record, "Were not marred by solicitation for funds, the total cost of the building being all pledged before dedication day."

On Sunday evening of the dedication services all the other churches of the city met with the Presbyterians, the sermon being preached by the Reverend C. N. Wilder for so many years the much loved pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Champaign. The church at this time numbered two hundred and one members.

On May 26, 1902, the church suffered a great loss in the death of Mr. T. S. Hubbard whose long service and the resolutions which the Session passed at that time have already been mentioned.

In recognition of the gift of Colonel and Mrs. S. T. Busey of the organ for the new church, the Session on June 9, 1902, voted the following:

"We the elders and authorized representatives of the First Presbyterian church, of Urbana, Illinois, on behalf of the membership and congregation, do hereby record our grateful appreciation of the generous gift to the church

of the new pipe organ by Colonel and Mrs. S. T. Busey in the name of their children Marietta Busey, Bertha Busey and Bowen Busey. We recall with pleasure the liberality of their subscription in the beginning of the movement for the new church building and the tireless and willing service they rendered in the giving of time and strength to the laborious details of the Building Committee, and just at a time when the limit of our resources seemed to have been reached, without four thousand dollars more still needed to complete and furnish the building. We recall with keenest pleasure the further liberality coupled with wisdom with which Colonel and Mrs. Busey offered us the new pipe organ on condition that all funds needed be raised before dedication day. We praise God for his blessing upon us, in that—through the liberality of our congregation and our many friends in the other churches and in the community, we were enabled to perfect this condition. Our great satisfaction and joy in dedication day, in that every dollar had been raised in advance, was, we believe under God's blessing, due to the stimulus of this conditional gift of the organ.

"And now we rejoice greatly in the generous execution of the beautiful and sweet-toned instrument that graces our auditorium and adds so greatly to our worship. We are sure that we express not only the heartfelt gratitude but also the sincere desire and prayer of every member of our church for God's blessing upon the generous donors."

It was during Mr. Hunt's pastorate that the chorus choir was abandoned and a quartet was substituted in its place, and, for the first time in the history of the church, a small fund was appropriated for the purchase of music and for the payment of the organist and the quartet. For years the Glovers had directed the choir and met the expense of its maintenance. Fifty dollars for music and two hundred dollars for musicians must have seemed to them like finding gold in California. By 1905 the amount appropriated for the music of the church was \$550, and later this amount was almost doubled.

In the fall of 1903 occurred the death of Mr. T. R. Leal. Mr. Leal had been an adherent of the church since its organization. As teacher, Sunday School superintendent and trustee, he had been an active force for almost fifty years. The Session's record shows the following minute:

"The Session desires to place on record its keen sense of the loss this church and the whole community have sustained in the death of Thomas R. Leal. Yet with this sense of loss there is also the spirit of gratitude for all that he was permitted to do and to be in this community. We are thankful for long years of wise counsel, and loyal service rendered as an officer of the church, but we are grateful most of all for the high standard which he set of Christian living and for his kindness of heart and incorruptible integrity."

In February, 1904, Mr. Hunt received a call to the Presbyterian church of Madison, Wisconsin, and announced his intention of accepting. It was with feeling of the deepest regret that the officers of the church and the members of the congregation received this announcement. Mr. Hunt's pastorate had witnessed a remarkable development in the strength, influence and membership of the church. Under his ministry the church had been almost recreated.

During the interim between pastorates the Reverend A. J. Berger was appointed stated supply. Many people will still remember his straightforward, magnetic sermons. He was one of the real preachers to fill the pulpit of the Urbana church and, old man as he was, there were many who felt a personal loss when the time came for him to step aside.

On July 10, 1904, the congregation voted to call the Reverend S. W. Findley of Oquawka, Illinois. Mr. Findley accepted the call and took up his work in September.

On December 12, 1904, on the resignation of Professor E. B. Green, Dean Thomas Arkle Clark was elected Clerk of the Session, a position which he has held to date.

In January, 1905, in view of the fact that a considerable amount of subscriptions had not been collected, the Trustees voted to appoint a financial agent to have charge of such matters. Mrs. Hattie Knowlton was appointed to this position.

Mr. Findley's pastorate was marked by no single outstanding event. He was one of the kindest, most considerate, most understanding pastors the church has ever had. He knew just the right thing to say at times of sorrow or of rejoicing. The church membership and subscriptions for the support of the church increased materially under his ministry. The statistical report for 1909-10 showed a membership of 320 in the Sunday School, 102 in the Christian Endeavor Society the largest in the city, and a church membership of 407. The church was said to be in the best financial condition in years. There was a good deal of discussion of the church music during Mr. Findley's pastorate, and a number of readjustments before everybody was satisfied if, indeed, every one is ever satisfied. The music situation continued to arouse comment and discussion for a number of years,—choir versus quartet being the chief subject of argument and how much either should be paid. Some foolish and unjust feeling was stirred up.

Following Mrs. T. S. Hubbard's death in 1907, the following minute was recorded:

"The Session of the First Presbyterian church of Urbana desires to express its grateful appreciation of the loving and efficient services of Mrs. T. S. Hubbard, who for years, has served this church as treasurer of its funds and guardian of its communion service."

In the spring of 1911 Mrs. S. T. Busey presented to the church the communion set which is in use at this time for which she received special thanks from the Session.

On December 21, 1913, Mr. Findley tendered his resignation to the congregation to take effect one week later, to permit him to accept a call to the Morgan Park, Illinois, Presbyterian church. He

had served the church faithfully and well for more than nine years and longer than any other pastor before his coming.

During the time between pastorates Professor Edward C. Hayes preached for the congregation.

It was not easy to find a successor to Mr. Findley. The first two men whom the congregation agreed upon—the Reverend James H. Laughlin, of Janesville, Wisconsin, and the Reverend E. G. Hildner, of Princeton, Indiana,—did not find it possible or feasible to accept the call tendered them.

On October 25, 1914, the Committee in charge of the selection of a pastor recommended that a call be extended to the Reverend Mr. J. J. Wilson, of Virginia, Illinois. On the first ballot the congregation voted unanimously to call Mr. Wilson—an initial unanimity which had never before occurred in the history of the church. Mr. Wilson accepted the call and began his pastorate on the first Sunday in December, 1914.

Mr. Wilson continued to serve the church for almost ten years. It was not until April, 1924, that he tendered his resignation to accept a call to the church at Oshkosh, Wisconsin. These ten years were very prosperous and progressive years in the history of the church. Financially, socially, and spiritually the church forged ahead. New organizations sprang up—Philo Christus Society in March, 1916, Westminster Guild in the spring of 1917, and the Men's Club in October, 1921, with Professor Provine as President. In January, 1921, the Session voted to support a missionary, and a year later, Miss Miriam Null, having offered her services for the work, it was definitely agreed to assume her support. This was made possible through the increased interest of the congregation in Missions and the increased contributions for benevolent work. The Session report when Mr. Wilson came to the church showed a total of \$450.00 in yearly gifts for benevolences; in 1920-21 this amount had grown to \$3,816.00 and the grand total for the support of the church had reached \$10,466.00.

Mrs. Hattie Knowlton was responsible for the organization of the Philo Christus Society. In making her report upon the forming of this organization the president said:

"To Mrs. Knowlton much credit is due. Out of her love for her church and her love for all young women she has given much time and thought to this new organization, that it may be helpful to the church and helpful to the young women who are its members."

Myra Love was first president of Westminster Guild and Grace Dexter, secretary.

Many points of interest are worthy of mention during Mr. Wilson's regime. At the congregational meeting April 4, 1917, Mrs.

W. T. Burford presented a series of resolutions touching on the World War into which we were just entering, the gist of which was, "That we give our loyal support to the President of the United States and his advisers, combined with our united prayers for their wise guidance, regardless of party affiliation, and that we have one desire, one aim, and one purpose in view which may be, that the righteousness of our nation be exalted, and its best welfare be promoted." The resolutions were adopted.

Dean Clark had been teaching a Sunday School class of young men for some years, and it is quite remarkable that all of these men but one, Donald Glover who was in medical school and not permitted to enlist, entered military service and were commissioned and that all but one, Charles Bowen Busey, came back unharmed. Lieutenant Busey was killed in action.

A quotation from the report of the Session in April, 1917, indicates the condition of the church:

"The past year in the life of our church has, on the whole, been very satisfactory. While the outgrowth may not have been all that we could hope for, yet there are unmistakable proofs that the inner or spiritual life has been intensified, and that the bonds of mutual interest and sympathy have become stronger. The constantly growing attendance upon the communion services is a splendid indication of these things."

The ladies of the Thimble Society this year contributed \$400 to the support of the church.

On September 14, 1917, occurred the death of Mr. G. W. Hubbard, eldest son of T. S. Hubbard, who for many years had been a member of the Board of Elders of the church.

The Clerk of the Sessions was authorized to send the following note to Mrs. Hubbard:

"The Session of the church want to express to you and to your family, their sincere sympathy in your bereavement, and to acknowledge the great service which for many years your husband has rendered to the church. His faithfulness in attendance upon the regular services of the church, his willingness to serve whenever there was work to be done, and his generosity in contributing to the support of all the activities of the church, will continue to be an inspiration to us all. The church will never be able to repay the great debt which it owes to his faithfulness and to the family which he has counseled."

In January, 1918, because of the coal famine, the Wednesday evening prayer meeting was transferred from the church to the manse.

The Trustees at one time had considerable discussion as to whether it were better to buy a moving picture machine for the church, secure an assistant for the pastor, or present him with a Ford car in order that he might more easily attend to his pastoral work. The matter was finally left to the pastor to decide, and he, after deliberation, voted for the car. Having bought the car, the

church was in something of the same condition as the woman who having bought a new carpet found that she had to refurnish the house. The next thing was a garage. Well, this is a machine age.

April 2, 1921, the matter of approving the election of women as Ruling Elders was discussed by the Session, but there was no consensus of opinion on the subject and no action taken. At a later meeting of the congregation a discussion of this matter was taken up and it was voted that it is not desirable that women should be elected to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon.

On March 7, 1923, it was voted to dispense with the evening preaching service and to give this time over to the Young People's Society.

In 1923 the Board of Elders was increased to eleven members. The subject of enlarging the church came up for serious discussion, but the matter of funds stood in the way, and no definite action was taken during Mr. Wilson's pastorate.

A successor to Mr. Wilson was found in the person of The Reverend Charles Sumner Pier, of Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Mr. Pier came to the church in the summer of 1924 and remained until September, 1926.

The church maintained a normal growth during Mr. Pier's administration, many names being added to the roll. The church building was put into better condition, through the floating of a loan, but it was decided that the Manse was so inadequate and in such a run-down condition that it was better to sell it than to attempt to put it into proper repair. The total membership of the church at the time of Mr. Pier's resignation was five hundred and thirty-five. The Ladies' Thimble Society was doing commendable work and reported receipts for the year of \$1,686.21.

The matter of an addition to the church in order properly to take care of Sunday school and other organizations of the church was given full discussion at the congregational meeting in April, 1926. The question as to how such an addition could be financed was settled through the generous gift of Mrs. Mary E. Busey, who at so many previous crises had come to the financial rescue of the congregation. She assumed the obligation for the erection of the "church house" on the south end of the present church building. The amount of her gift exceeded \$12,500.00.

Mr. Pier's resignation was tendered to the congregation August 29, 1926. Professor Jas. A. Melrose, of James Milligan University, Decatur, Illinois, acted as supply following Mr. Pier's withdrawal. If a church has to have a supply, Dr. Melrose is a perfect one.

The Reverend John H. Gardner Jr., came to the church February 1, 1927 and is still its pastor. His selection was a most fortunate

nate one, not only because of what he himself is, but also because of his wife. They have youth and training and energy and a vision of the possibilities of a charge like Urbana. Mrs. Gardner is the daughter of The Reverend Dr. Edw. H. Pence, of Detroit, and a niece of Professor W. D. Pence, one time member of the Board of Elders of this church. The Gardner's have come to a congregation which has in it many middle aged and young people—people who may be depended upon for years to come, to carry on the work of the church. Mr. Gardner's ministry has stimulated spirituality, has awakened a general good feeling. Old animosities have been buried and forgotten, and many of the lethargic have been stirred to activity. The hope of every member of the congregation is that the relationship which now exists may long continue.

The discussion of a new Manse came up early in 1927. A lot was finally contracted for at 403 Indiana avenue and partly paid for by contributions from members of the congregation. The contract for the house was let in the summer of 1928, the total cost of the lot and the house being something over \$16,000.00. This amount was made available through \$7,168.00 from the old parsonage fund, and \$2,000.00 subscribed by the Thimble Society, the remainder being borrowed from the Building and Loan Association. The ladies of the Thimble Society agreed to pay \$1,000 a year on the debt. It is that sort of women who have kept the church going these seventy-five years.

On April 7, 1930, occurred the death of Mrs. Mary E. Busey. For more than fifty years she had been a good angel of the church, and her going was an irreparable loss. In her will Mrs. Busey left a trust fund of \$4,000, the income from which is to be used for the support of the church.

By the will of Mrs. Jennie Sloan, the church was also given \$200 in 1930.

In March, 1931, a memorial chandelier was installed in the church in memory of Mrs. Lillian J. Dougan who died November 25, 1930. This beautiful memorial was made possible through a bequest of \$100 to the church by Mrs. Dougan and the generous contribution of her daughter, Mrs. Bernice Dougan Burgess of Tucson, Arizona.

At the annual congregational meeting, April 1, 1931, Dean Thomas Arkle Clark was elected to the office of Ruling Elder for life.

In any church history that is truthfully written it is the women who most often take the heroic roles. It is unfortunate that it is impossible in this brief history to mention all the individuals who during the seventy-five years of its existence have contributed to the advancement and the strengthening of the church. Certainly the in-

terest and the untiring efforts of a few outstanding women have had much to do in critical situations of the church's history in holding the organization together. For fifty years or more Mrs. Emeline Leal, Mrs. Isabelle Hunt and Mrs. T. S. Hubbard devoted their strength and their talents to the upbuilding of the church. Mrs. Hunt's name and Mrs. Hubbard's were on the original church roll, and Mrs. Leal's came only a short time later. There is not an activity of the church during the first fifty years of its life with which their names are not connected. As long as she lived Mrs. Hubbard was the church treasurer, and from its organization until physical weakness and the infirmities of old age made it impossible. Mrs. Hunt had charge of the primary class in the church's Sunday School. When she was forced to give up the work Mrs. Glover stepped in and has ever since with few intermissions carried the burden. Mrs. Leal was always on hand when work was to be done. There are other names which shine brightly in the history of the church—Eva Foote, Edna Post Hubbard, "Auntie" Russell, Mary E. Busey who never failed to come forward at financial crises with generous gifts, Mrs. W. H. Smith, Sarah Savage, Hattie Bennett Knowlton, Emma Weber Gere—what a host she has been for forty years in the work of the church,—Mrs. Burford, Mrs. Mason,—its history could not be adequately written without paying loving tribute to these and to many more devoted women.

There are others carrying on with equal courage today, but the list is too long to be recounted here. It is to them that we owe the progress and the stability of the church.

May their tribe increase!

It is not the business of the historian to prophesy. His duty is to record what had happened, but he can not refrain from saying that the future of the church never looked brighter. The congregation is growing, finances are stable, it will not be long before an addition to the church will be imperative, and when this time comes, if the men fall down, the women of the church will come to the front.

Following is the list of Ruling Elders of the church since its organization, with the period of service of each:

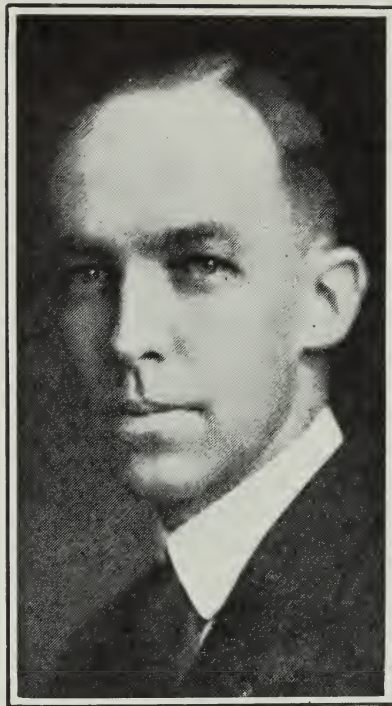
Thomas S. Hubbard.....	1857-1802	G. W. Yates.....	1891-1894
Alexander M. Ayres.....	1857-1887	T. C. Hughey.....	1898-1899
Samuel M. Noel.....	1857-1875	John D. Pulliam.....	1887-1892
Aaron Bennett.....	1866-1888	G. P. Clinton.....	1898-1902
John A. Glover.....	1887-1916	W. D. Pence.....	1898-1899
James Matheson.....	1888—Did not serve	J. A. Edwards.....	1902-To date
Albon Bevis.....	1898-1899 & 1907-1913	Geo. W. Hubbard.....	1902-1917
F. W. Hall.....	1899-1905	A. F. Meeks.....	1902-1911
M. B. Hammond.....	1899-1904	C. D. McLane.....	1903-1904
E. B. Greene.....	1899-1904	Thomas Arkle Clark.....	1904-To date

J. Q. Adams.....	1905-1906	C. T. Knipp.....	1915-1924
E. A. Nichol.....	1905-1911	J. G. Thompson.....	1916-1919
R. H. Stewart.....	1907-1913	Jas. Hutchinson.....	1918-To date
F. G. Willson.....	1908-1913	A. S. Mason.....	1919-To date
J. M. Love.....	1910-1927	Emile Rauchenstein.....	1923-1924
Isaac Mitchell.....	1911-1913	W. B. Nevens.....	1923-1926
J. H. Pettit.....	1911-1913	T. A. Fitzgerald.....	1925-1927
John A. Stewart.....	1911-1927	E. T. Robbins.....	1925-To date
P. A. Glenn.....	1913-To date	E. W. Lehman.....	1926-To date
Harold W. Stewart.....	1914-1915	D. A. Grossman.....	1927-To date
James M. Love.....	1913-1923	C. M. Woodworth.....	1927-1929
J. A. Stewart.....	1914-1927	James S. Conard.....	1928-To date
C. H. Watts.....	1915-1930	F. S. Haven.....	1920-To date
		L. F. Erickson.....	1930-To date

Following is a list of Trustees who have served the church for varying periods with the date of election of each. The records are such that it has been difficult to determine the exact constituents of the Board of Trustees for each year:

T. S. Hubbard.....	1857	John H. Savage.....	"
Asa Gere.....	"	Mrs. E. M. Knowlton.....	"
Elisha Harkness.....	"	Miss Minnie Weber.....	"
L. M. Cutcheon.....	"	Mrs. S. T. Busey.....	"
E. Boyden.....	"	S. C. Briggs.....	1900
S. M. Noel.....	"	Mrs. Flora McIntyre.....	"
W. N. Coler.....	"	T. A. Burt.....	1901
A. M. Ayres.....	"	Mrs. F. M. Wright.....	"
A. Lyons.....	"	John A. Edwards.....	"
George Nichol.....	1866	M. B. Hammond.....	1902
A. P. Cunningham.....	"	L. W. Robinson.....	"
W. J. Ermentrout.....	"	M. A. Dewey.....	"
O. O. Alexander.....	"	W. W. Huss.....	"
Thompson Elder.....	"	Mrs. Edward Fulton.....	1903
Warren Dunbar.....	1870	H. T. Hubbard.....	1904
J. A. Henderson.....	"	H. W. Mumford.....	1905
W. M. Goodwin.....	"	Chester A. Harris.....	1907
C. D. Webster.....	1870	C. H. Watts.....	1908
T. R. Leal.....	1871	J. H. Gill.....	"
J. S. McCullough.....	1874	E. H. Waldo.....	1910
Alex Spence.....	1875	F. E. Williamson.....	1911
J. E. Hunt.....	"	James M. Love.....	1912
Geo. W. Besore.....	1878	John McGehee.....	"
T. Monett.....	"	C. C. Burford.....	"
F. M. Snyder.....	"	Mrs. G. K. Linton.....	1914
T. B. Kyle.....	1881	A. S. Mason.....	1916
James Matheson.....	1884	Mrs. Geo. W. Lindsey.....	1917
William Nichols.....	"	W. G. Palmer.....	1918
F. M. Wright.....	"	Mrs. O. B. Lindley.....	1921
G. W. Hubbard.....	1887	L. H. Provine.....	1921
Dr. Frisler.....	"	W. C. Maguire.....	1922
August Ahlrich.....	1888	E. T. Robbins.....	1924
F. W. Hall.....	1898	Mrs. May Havens.....	1925

Mrs. Martha L. Nevens.....	1926	Dr. H. A. Hindman.....	1929
C. F. Schlatter.....	1927	Mrs. F. M. Gere.....	"
W. A. Foster.....	"	Dr. G. R. Blackstone.....	1930
H. H. Braucher.....	"	Rex L. Brown.....	1930
H. T. Scovill.....	1928	Mrs. Marietta Busey Tawney.....	1931



THE REVEREND JOHN H. GARDNER, JR.

HISTORY
of
The First Presbyterian Church

URBANA, ILLINOIS

1931-1956

By
CENTENNIAL HISTORY COMMITTEE
William Habberton
Mrs. L. L. Corrie



OUR CHURCH TODAY

The blending of the new and the old, with the Chapel-Education Building in the foreground and the Sanctuary unit to the south.

THE PASTORS, 1931-1956

It is interesting to note that, according to available records, twenty-five ministers have served the Urbana church during its hundred-year history. Of this number, six have served during the last twenty-five years. For a brief period following the Civil War there seems to have been no regular minister, the pulpit being filled by supply preachers.

The Reverend John H. Gardner, Jr., was minister from February, 1927, until the spring of 1936. His was one of the longest pastorates in the history of the church. Mr. Gardner was a popular and influential man in the community as well as being an effective leader in the church. During his ministry the new manse was constructed on an attractive lot on Indiana Avenue. The total cost, including land, was approximately \$19,500. This comfortable house continues to be the home of our ministers. Mr. Gardner's services were inevitably sought after by other congregations, and in 1936 he accepted the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland. He has continued to grow as a leader in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

Mr. Gardner was succeeded by the Reverend Melvin A. Pearce, who served until October, 1942. Mr. Pearce was an excellent preacher and a man of great personal charm. His qualities and achievements were recognized by Blackburn College, Carlinville, Illinois, which, in June, 1942, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. A beautiful reminder of Dr. Pearce's ministry is the pulpit furniture still in use in the church. The pulpit, communion table, and baptismal font were the gift of Dr. Pearce and Mr. H. H. Alp.

It was during the ministry of Dr. Pearce that the remaining indebtedness on the manse was liquidated, thanks to the diligent efforts of the ladies' "Thimble Society." The minutes of the meeting of February 29, 1940, record that the Board of Trustees was to be reimbursed for \$300 "advanced" by it in order to cancel the mortgage. A note from the Trustees expressing gratitude for the enterprise and devotion of the ladies of the church was read at one of their later meetings.

Dr. Pearce was called to the church at Hutchinson, Kansas, from which he returned to Illinois to serve the Northminster Church at Evanston. He continues, therefore, to be an important ministerial leader of the Synod of Illinois.

Reverend Herbert J. Doran came from Dixon, Illinois, in 1943, and served the Urbana church effectively until 1948, when he accepted

a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Vancouver, Washington. Mr. Doran was a man of great intelligence and deep spiritual insight. His sermons were thoughtful and penetrating, and his listeners invariably left the sanctuary in a mood of reverence and uplift. During Mr. Doran's ministry the need for additional Sunday Church School facilities became increasingly evident, and tentative plans were made for building. The war years, however, did not seem propitious for such an undertaking, and the building program was postponed. Eventually, planning was resumed, with the gratifying results to be described later.

The years following Mr. Doran's departure were trying ones in the church. For many months the congregation was without a minister; and it is a tribute to the faith and devotion of the membership that services were held regularly and the functions of the church were maintained without the guidance of a pastor. It is proper here to record the great help given during these months by the Reverend A. Ray Cartledge of the First Presbyterian Church, Champaign, and the Reverend James R. Hine of the McKinley Memorial Church, Champaign. Serving as Moderators, preaching, counseling, encouraging, their services, given in a Christian spirit, will long be remembered with sincere appreciation. Also, it should be said, Dr. Ralph Cummins, General Presbyter, Synod of Illinois, gave generously of his time and counsel. His mature wisdom and insight were of immense importance, especially during this period. His friendship for the church has continued to be one of its treasured assets.

Two other ministerial friends of the Church who served it for brief periods, but in a distinguished manner, were Dr. E. F. Nickoley and Dr. William M. Hudson. Both were men of high educational and intellectual accomplishments; both were inspiring speakers; both were dedicated Christians. Their willingness to serve when their services were badly needed, notwithstanding personal inconvenience, was characteristic of their generous spirits.

Reverend Theodore O. M. Wills was called to the Urbana Church in 1949 and served for one year. In the autumn of 1950 he was stricken with a heart attack and died after a brief illness. He correctly assessed the seriousness of his condition, and in the days preceding his death composed a moving letter addressed to the last congregation he was to serve. His passing left the church once more confronted by the necessity of finding a minister. That this was by no means an easy task was well known, and it was approached with earnest thoughtfulness by those to whom it was committed.

After making a thorough survey of the field, the Pulpit Committee selected the Reverend Luther P. Powell. A young man of great vigor (he had won high honors for his skill in tennis) and of strong convictions, his preaching attracted much attention and generally favorable comment. He did not hesitate to deal with controversial subjects or to engage in public debate on questions affecting the moral and civic interests of the community.

Mr. Powell was greatly concerned with the rural churches of the country. He considered their loss of membership and declining influence one of the most regrettable facts of contemporary American life. When, therefore, Drew Theological Seminary, from which he had received a doctor's degree, urged him to accept the chair of Rural Theology, he felt that it was his duty to do so. Indeed, he was told that the continuation of instruction in this area was dependent upon his acceptance. It was with great regret that the Session accepted his request for a release after slightly more than a year of service. His relationship with the church was dissolved as of July 31, 1952.

Thus, the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana in a period of less than two years lost two ministers, one by death and one by resignation. It was recognized that the situation was somewhat critical. Not only was a very able man demanded by the situation, but one whose services might be expected to continue for a number of years. Already certain members of the church knew of the Reverend Joseph R. Laughlin and believed him to be a highly qualified candidate. Fortunately, it was discovered that though he was enjoying unusual success as the associate pastor of the large First Presbyterian Church of Wichita, Kansas, he was interested in becoming pastor of a smaller church. He was, in fact, attracted to the community of Champaign-Urbana and to the First Church, Urbana, in particular. The congregation enthusiastically reciprocated, and, on November 1, 1952, Mr. Laughlin became the twenty-fifth minister of the church. He was destined to serve during the concluding years of the first century of its history.

It would be embarrassing to the present minister if the historian were to undertake to catalog all his virtues or were to dwell upon his achievements in Urbana. Yet such has been the growth of the church during these fruitful years and such the significance of recent developments, that the rest of this history cannot be separated from Mr. Laughlin's ministry. That these achievements were not his alone, he would be the first to insist. But the spirit of cooperation and desire to do one's full part, so admirably displayed by the members of the

congregation, itself reflects the confidence and warm esteem in which he is held, and is a measure of the effectiveness of his leadership.

In passing, it should be said that our ministers have had their wives, one of them (Mr. Pearce) acquiring his locally. These good and gracious women, have, in their way, played a most important part in the life of the church, and it is to be regretted that such a brief and somewhat anonymous mention may be made of them.

GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Shortly after Mr. Laughlin became minister he said, "I anticipate with you the record of numerical, physical and spiritual growth that lies ahead. I sincerely believe that our Church has an unlimited potential. God has been good to give us a great opportunity for growth." His words proved to be strikingly prophetic. As of December 31, 1952, the membership of the Church was 610; by the end of 1953 it had increased to 646; by the end of 1954, to 724; by the end of 1955, to 810. At the present time (October, 1956) it has reached 933. It is doubtful whether there has been a comparable period of growth in the entire century of the life of the church. And certainly this growth has far exceeded that of the Presbyterian Church at large, in a period of generally gratifying increase.

It has been one of Mr. Laughlin's chief concerns that the Sunday Church School should receive the strongest possible support. He has frequently said, "The church must teach, or it will die." In time the Urbana church was to realize its desire for an education building suitably to house its Church School. But prior to this time important steps were taken to stimulate interest, to augment and improve the teaching and supervisory staff, and to enrich the curriculum at all levels. In order to implement this program, one of the first steps taken was to add to the church staff a full-time Director of Christian Education. Miss LaVeda F. Mayers, who assumed this important position, brought to her work sound preparation and a dedicated spirit. She continues to serve, and her office has become increasingly important in directing and coordinating all the education activities of the church. The employment of Miss Mayers was itself a significant event, in that it was the first time in the history of the church that a professionally trained person, other than the minister himself, became permanently associated with it.

Under the leadership of Mr. Laughlin and Miss Mayers, the

Sunday Church School grew even more rapidly than did membership in the church itself. From an average attendance of 139 in 1951, the Church School has grown to an enrollment of 410.

Needless to say, such rapid growth placed severe strain on the physical facilities of the church. To meet the situation, as well as to offer increased opportunities for public worship, the Session, in the autumn of 1954, approved the minister's recommendation that two identical services be held, one at nine-thirty and the other at eleven o'clock. It was found that this arrangement was a great convenience to many persons, for some of whom, indeed, attendance at a late morning service was impossible. That conducting two services and preaching two sermons in one morning made heavy demands on the minister was undeniable. Some considered it too heavy a load. But Mr. Laughlin accepted it as his "reasonable service."

A year later—that is, the autumn of 1955—the Church School, its classes filled to capacity, took the same step, initiating dual sessions at 9:30 and 11:00. Dr. Franklin Reiss, the earnest and capable superintendent of the Church School, says: "It is a thrilling sight to see entire families coming to our church for an hour of worship and Church School at the same time." He adds: "A word of praise must be spoken for the willing and capable people who make possible our double Sunday School staffs." Certainly all members and friends of the church heartily second these words of appreciation for an extremely important job well done.

The growth, enthusiasm, and dedicated service that have characterized the Church School during recent years have been equally evident in other phases of the church program. Two large and excellent groups of young people of junior and senior high school age bear witness to the concern of the church for its youth. A graded choir program embraces all ages from junior-age children up. A Boy Scout Troop and Explorer Post sponsored by the Men's Club provide opportunities for wholesome activities, in a Christian environment, for from 60 to 70 growing boys of the church community.

These activities, to which should be added the numerous, frequently unrecognized services of the women of the church, represent countless hours of work done by the lay people. But behind their labors stands the personality of the minister. His faith, his prayers, and his leadership have resulted in a Men's Prayer Group, evening study groups, a Board of Parish Visitors, a Board of Church School Callers, and a Board of New Life Callers. It has been suggested that "New Life" is fittingly descriptive of the First Presbyterian Church, Urbana, as it faces a second century of service.

THE URBANA CHURCH AND THE CHURCH AT LARGE

While the Urbana church was growing and while its annual budget was correspondingly increasing, its Benevolence obligations were not being overlooked. Indeed, in rather special ways the church interested itself in missions at home and beyond the seas. An undertaking that brought deep satisfaction to many members, especially the women of the church, was the support of Miss Miriam E. Null, who for many years was a missionary in China. Miss Null was a personal representative of the Urbana church in the mission field. She died in August, 1956, after a long career of valiant service.

Nearer home, the Urbana church for a number of years helped support the newly organized Presbyterian Church at Rantoul, this support being included as a regular item in the budget of the church. Because of the increasing strength of the Rantoul church, this support is to be withdrawn at the end of the current fiscal year (1956). But a new responsibility is being planned, that of regular financial assistance to the Community Presbyterian Church of Champaign. The Community Church is the most recently organized Presbyterian Church in Champaign County. Situated in an area of rapid growth, it serves the needs of a new part of Champaign-Urbana where the opportunities are great. The Urbana church has a deep concern for its success.

One of the most gratifying accomplishments of the church was in connection with the Displaced Persons program. In 1950, after careful arrangements had been made, the church brought to the community Mr. and Mrs. Michael Mangian and their small daughter. Mr. Mangian was a Greek; Mrs. Mangian was an Austrian. Surely in the entire D P program, no effort has proved more happily successful. For this fine family, it has meant new friends, new opportunities, a new home, and American citizenship. For the church which sponsored it, it has brought an experience of helpfulness, richly rewarded by the presence of these good friends from overseas who have become members of the church and earnest fellow-workers in the Kingdom. The family has grown. There are now four Mangian children, two girls and two boys.

THE BUILDING PROGRAM

The Urbana church, the planning and construction of which are recounted in an earlier part of this history, is a dignified and beloved building. But it is an old building, inadequate for the needs of a rapidly growing congregation. A good deal was done to it by way of ingenious adaptation, and classes in the Church School were meeting in rather surprising places. As for congregational dinners and similar large occasions, the second floor, which included kitchen facilities, was used. It would be untrue to say that members of the church were unhappy in these humble and homey surroundings. Indeed, many older persons will remember with fondness gatherings in the old upstairs. But the fact remained that, with the rapid increase in church membership and with the rapid expansion of the Church School, the need for new facilities was becoming more and more pressing.

The first important step was taken in 1948. At that time, the Session appointed a Long Range Planning Committee to work on the problem of determining the physical needs of the church and of proposing ways and means of meeting them. The committee recommended that a new building be constructed on the site of the "Church House," immediately north of the church building. The dwelling located there had been the home of Mrs. Mae Nicolaus, a devoted member of the congregation, and was being used at the time by the Sunday Church School. The new building recommended by the Long Range Planning Committee was to meet the needs of the Church School and of the youth program generally, and was to provide adequate space for dining and recreational facilities for the entire congregation. Three years later (in 1951) this committee recommended that the Board of Trustees negotiate for the purchase of the vacant lot on Elm Street lying immediately west of the Church House. It also recommended that the Trustees secure the advice of architects in order to prepare preliminary plans for presentation to the congregation.

On March 9, 1952, a Temporary Building Committee was formed to ascertain specific needs and to work with the architects in formulating plans. On October 12, 1952, this committee recommended that the church enter a contract with Berger-Kelley and Associates, architects, of Champaign. The architects were to begin at once to draw plans.

On February 22, 1953, the Board of Trustees appointed a Permanent Building Committee to work with the architects and to consider the question of financing construction. On July 19, 1953, the



GROUND-BREAKING SERVICE FOR THE CHAPEL-EDUCATION BUILDING

October 4, 1953

Participants (left to right): Frank J. Schwartz, Contractor; Thomas E. Berger, Architect; the Rev. Joseph R. Laughlin; and Dr. E. L. Theiss, chairman of the Building Committee.

plans which had been approved by the Building Committee were presented to the congregation for consideration. The plans were generally acceptable, and the Board of Trustees was authorized to enter into a contract to the extent of \$170,000 (later increased to \$186,000) for the construction of a Chapel-Education Building. It was the consensus of the congregation that the plans provided skillfully for the blending of the new with the old. It was generally believed, also, that the expansion beyond the modest structure earlier envisaged was desirable and necessary in the light of the enlarged program of the church. The amount of the contemplated expenditure,

though large, was believed not to be beyond the capacity of the congregation to support.

On October 4, 1953, ground was broken. Favored by mild, bright weather, construction proceeded apace throughout the ensuing winter. By the end of August, 1954, it had reached the point at which grading and seeding of the lawn could be accomplished. Many willing workers among the men of the church were found to do much of this job. In September, 1954, the concrete floors of the new building were cleaned and prepared for the covering of asphalt tile. Again, non-professional labor accomplished a really professional job. The men of the church, under the supervision of trained persons, did excellent work, and effected a substantial saving.

One of the parts of the building in which there was special interest was the kitchen. The women of the church had patiently worked in the archaic quarters provided in the old building, and it was with considerable enthusiasm that the Women's Association undertook the planning and equipping of the new kitchen. As a special project, they purchased the finest of stoves, refrigerators, dishwashers, and stainless steel cabinets, and in general made this part of the new structure a model to be admired by all. It has proved to be functional to a high degree.

The Sunday Church School began using the new building on October 24, 1954. Classes for nursery, kindergarten, primary, junior, and junior-high groups were accommodated in the beautifully appointed rooms, with their well-arranged, adjustable walls. The high school and adult groups continue to use rooms in the Sanctuary unit.

It is impossible here to record all the numerous and varied uses to which the Chapel-Education Building has been, and is being put. Mariners and youth groups, Men's Club and Boy Scouts, Mothers and Daughters, Presbytery and Synod—all these and more have found here the gracious answer to their needs.

As for Westminster Chapel (for such it was named), its beauty and sanctity have added meaning to moments of meditation, to intimate services of worship, and to marriages solemnized within its walls. And those who have brought here their dead must have felt with new comfort the words, "I am the resurrection and the life." One cannot adequately describe the beauty of Westminster Chapel; it must be experienced.

Formal dedication of the Chapel-Education Building was held on Sunday, November 14, 1954. Many persons participated. The choir



THE WESTMINSTER CHAPEL

Dedicated April 4, 1955

sang Brahms's beautiful "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place." Dr. Robert G. Bone, an elder, brought greetings from the University of Illinois. Dr. Robert Worth Frank, President of McCormick Theological Seminary, gave the dedicatory address, using the theme, "Why the World Needs the Gospel." In the presentation-of-keys ceremony, Mr. Thomas E. Berger, architect, Mr. Frank J. Schwartz, contractor,

Dr. E. L. Theiss, chairman of the Building Committee, Dr. J. F. Bell, president of the Board of Trustees, and Reverend Joseph R. Laughlin participated. And all attending had their part in the ritual of the "Act of Dedication":

"To Thee, O God, we dedicate this house."

What is to be said of the numerous friends and members of the church who made possible the Chapel-Education Building? Surely they cannot be named—their number is too great. Yet there are a few persons whose names must be mentioned, a few gifts—not necessarily the largest—that have a special historical interest. Mrs. Mae Nicolaus gave her girlhood home to the church and made a generous bequest in her will. Her name has been given to the "Parlor" of the new building. Mr. Frank J. Schwartz, the master builder, scrupulously guided every operation, and added to this contribution that of a major part of his legitimate fee. Mr. Schwartz' name has been given to the "Fellowship Hall." Mr. Richard Frank Musson, not a member of the Urbana church, bequeathed it forty acres of valuable Champaign County land, the return from the sale of which materially aided the total project. Miss Laura Belle Ayres, daughter of one of the great Presbyterian families of an earlier generation, bequeathed a valuable house and lot in Urbana. Dean Thomas Arkle Clark and Mrs. Clark, having given so much during their lifetime, made a generous bequest to live after them. The children of Mrs. F. M. Gere and of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Glover added to the gifts previously made by these two devoted women, each of whom had taught in the Church School for more than thirty-five years. The kindergarten rooms were dedicated to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Glover, and the primary department was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Emma Gere. The lovely nursery rooms were designated as the Freeman-Palmer Nursery, given by Mrs. Marie Freeman Palmer and Paul W. Freeman, in memory of Carrie F. Freeman and William G. Palmer. The Women's Association plans to place in the parlor a picture in honor and memory of Mrs. Hattie Bennett Knowlton who, at the time of her death in November, 1955, was the oldest member of our church. Reverend Laughlin characterized her in these words: "As we look at our Church today, we can quickly see the influence and the blessings of Mrs. Knowlton's life."

The thirty or more persons, most of them by no means wealthy, who felt that they should be among the thousand-dollar donors, served finally to vindicate the common faith that the job could be done. Their

names appear on plaques adorning the walls of the Chapel-Education Building.

One gift may be described in words that appeared as part of the special program of dedication of the furnishings of Westminster Chapel: "The Chapel furniture, the chancel appointments and the Baldwin organ were the gift of Mrs. Robbins in memory of her husband, Ernest Thompson Robbins. For 28 years Mr. Robbins was a faithful and devoted member of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana. He was a loyal Churchman, a ruling Elder of the Church for 26 years, a friend of the children and youth of the Church, and a man who has left a lasting mark on the life of the Church. It is with reverence and gratitude that the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, through the Session of the Church, receives this generous and appropriate gift, and dedicates it to the memory of Elder Robbins and to the glory and praise of God."

This section of the history, surely the most stirring, may well be concluded with a list of the men and women of the church who served so faithfully as members of the Building Committee. Theirs was a great responsibility; theirs, with God's help, a glorious achievement!

THE BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mrs. O. T. Bonnett	Mr. Lowell Fisher
Mr. L. E. Card	Mrs. S. H. Pierce
Mr. P. D. Converse	Dr. G. L. Porter
Mr. Ivan Danhof	Mr. Frank J. Schwartz
Mrs. C. H. Farnham	Mr. H. T. Scovill
Mr. E. L. Theiss, <i>chairman</i>	
Mr. R. W. Bills, <i>vice-chairman</i>	
Mrs. Jo C. Williamson, <i>secretary</i>	
Mr. J. F. Bell, <i>member ex-officio</i>	
Rev. Joseph R. Laughlin, <i>member ex-officio</i>	

THE SUB-COMMITTEES

Finance	Sub-Committee
	Mr. H. T. Scovill, <i>chairman</i>
	Mr. W. E. Thomas
	Mr. P. M. Van Arsdell
Special	Gifts and Memorials Sub-Committee
	Mr. Jo C. Williamson, <i>chairman</i>
	Mr. E. W. Lehmann
	Mr. L. L. Corrie
Chapel	Furnishings Sub-Committee
	Mr. L. H. Provine, <i>chairman</i>
	Mrs. E. T. Robbins
	Mrs. L. L. Corrie

Education Building Furnishings Sub-Committee

Mrs. S. H. Pierce, *chairman*

Mrs. O. T. Bonnett

Mrs. C. H. Farnham

Parlor Furnishing Sub-Committee

Mrs. J. F. Bell, *chairman*

Mrs. J. C. T. Rogers

Mrs. Fred Green

Kitchen Furnishing Sub-Committee

Mrs. C. H. Farnham, *chairman*

THE CHURCH STAFF

For many years the Urbana church had a small but excellent staff, with much of the clerical work of the church office being done by young women employed on an hourly basis. During the ministry of Reverend Herbert J. Doran, a full-time secretary was employed. At the time of the death of Reverend Theodore O. M. Wills, in October, 1950, the church was without a secretary, and the Session was most fortunate to procure the services of Miss Effie Turner, a faithful member of the church and a former teacher. Miss Turner served on a part-time basis until the arrival of Reverend Luther P. Powell in June, 1951. At this time, she began serving on a full-time basis. She also served as secretary to Reverend Joseph R. Laughlin until her retirement in August, 1953. Writing in *The Tower*, monthly congregational publication of the church, Mr. Laughlin said of Miss Turner: "Her fine stenographic ability, her devotion to her Church, her great desire to serve people, and her willingness to go far beyond the second mile in her work has won for her the respect, friendship, and gratitude of the entire congregation."

Mrs. Gertrude S. Griesheimer succeeded Miss Turner as the pastor's secretary. She brought to her work exceptionally high qualifications. Following her graduation from Cornell University, she was in charge of the responsible work of teacher certification there. Possessed of gracious personality, high intelligence, and unusual clerical competence, she serves the church with great efficiency.

Undoubtedly, something of a record has been established by the church sexton. For forty-five years Mr. Henry T. Wyninger has served the church with great faithfulness. To Mr. Wyninger, being church sexton has been more than a job—rather, a Christian mission. In 1951, the congregation held a special dinner in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Wyninger. It was a dual occasion: the fiftieth wedding anni-

versary of the honored guests and the fortieth of Mr. Wyninger's service to the church. In 1954, the Board of Trustees made Mr. Wyninger an honorary member of that important body—a fitting honor for long and faithful service.

When the new Chapel-Education Building was completed, it became necessary to enlarge the custodial staff. Mr. William Karr was employed as sexton of the new building.

It would be impossible to list the names of all those who have served so well as members of the church staff. But those who are currently serving may be mentioned. The coming of Miss LaVeda F. Mayers as Director of Christian Education has been referred to. Miss Harriet Francis is the efficient financial secretary, she having succeeded Miss Maude Alverson, who held this position for more than twenty years. Mrs. A. O. Dawson became the church organist in 1950. She is not only an outstanding instrumentalist; in addition, she has shown fine abilities as a choir director, and she has assumed the dual responsibility of directing the choirs and playing the organ at times when there was no regular choral director. Recently (in September, 1956) Mr. Jay Allen was employed as choir director. He brought to his duties a rich background of choral training and experience. In September, 1956, a new staff position was created by the Session—that of full-time Parish Visitor. Mrs. Stanley Hall, for many years an active member of the church, was employed to fill this important position.

Thus, as the church grew in numbers and in influence, and as the physical facilities were enlarged, the church staff was increased to meet the growing needs. It is an admirable group of dedicated Christians who lead in the work of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana as its first century of service ends and as it looks forward with confidence to the years that lie ahead.

One incident of the centennial year which produced much satisfaction to the members of the church was the honor that came to the pastor. In June, 1956, Millikin University, one of the strongest church-affiliated institutions of the state, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. The citation, signed by the Reverend Robert R. Crothers, summarized the achievements of Dr. Laughlin. All the statements contained in the citation are pertinent. But the reference to his leadership in achieving the great goal of the Chapel-Education Building, his "strong emphasis on Christian family

life," his "special interest in the field of Christian education," his contributions to the Faith and Life Curriculum of the Presbyterian Church and to other religious publications—these seem to point up the areas of special strength of Dr. Laughlin's ministry. Yet surely even this impressive enumeration is not all. The chief strength of the twenty-fifth pastor of the Urbana Presbyterian Church lies not in any professional competence, important as this may be. It lies, rather, in the possession of those Christian virtues of which St. Paul wrote—Faith, Hope, and Love. And to the centennial pastor, also, the greatest of these is Love!



OUR CENTENNIAL PASTOR

Rev. Joseph R. Laughlin, D.D.

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